

# *MAGAZINE OF ART*

MAY 1953 75 CENTS THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS



JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY: **ANTONI GAUDI**

GEORGE L. K. MORRIS: **EUROPEAN WHISTLE-STOPS**

PAINTINGS BY **FRANZ KLINE**

W. G. CONSTABLE: **THE BIRTH OF MODERN PAINTING IN LANDSCAPE**

ERNESTO ROGERS: **MAX BILL**

JUSTINE M. CORDWELL: **NATURALISM AND STYLIZATION IN YORUBA ART**

## Magazine of Art Editorial Board:

### James Thrall Soby, Chairman

Philip R. Adams	S. Lane Faison	Hermon More
H. Harvard Arnason	Lloyd Goodrich	Grace L. McC. Morley
Alfred H. Barr, Jr.	Talbot Hamlin	Duncan Phillips
Jacques Barzun	Bartlett H. Hayes, Jr.	Daniel Catton Rich
John I. H. Baur	Henry-Russell Hitchcock	E. P. Richardson
George Boas	Henry R. Hope	Charles H. Sawyer
Serge Chermayeff	Joseph H. Hudnut	Joseph C. Sloane
Agnes Rindge Claflin	Philip C. Johnson	Franklin C. Watkins
Sumner McK. Crosby	Edgar Kaufmann, Jr.	Frederick S. Wight
René d'Harnoncourt	A. Hyatt Mayor	Carl Zigrosser
Guy Pène du Bois	Millard Meiss	

*Magazine of Art* is published by The American Federation of Arts, 1083 Fifth Avenue, New York 28, N. Y. It is mailed to all chapters and members of The American Federation of Arts, a part of each annual membership fee being credited as a subscription. Subscriptions: United States and possessions, \$6 per year; Canada, \$6.50; Foreign, \$7; single copies 75 cents. Published monthly, October through May. All MSS should be sent to the Editor. Unsolicited MSS should be accompanied by photographs; no responsibility is assumed for their return. *Magazine of Art* is indexed in Art Index and Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature. Entered as second-class matter Oct. 4, 1921, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C. and re-entered Apr. 14, 1932, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Title Trade Mark Registered in the U. S. Patent Office. Copyright 1953 by The American Federation of Arts.

### The American Federation of Arts

Founded 1909. A non-profit and educational association incorporated in 1916.

#### Officers:

Robert Woods Bliss, HONORARY PRESIDENT	Roy R. Neuberger, THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT
Thomas Brown Rudd, PRESIDENT	& TREASURER
Richard F. Bach, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT	G. Burton Cumming, SECRETARY
Eloise Spaeth, SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT	

Director: G. Burton Cumming

Consultant on Development: Otto L. Spaeth

#### Trustees:

Philip R. Adams	Ralph F. Colin	Arthur A. Houghton, Jr.	Charles H. Sawyer
H. Harvard Arnason	Russell Cowles	Daniel Longwell	James S. Schramm
Lee A. Ault	Sumner McK. Crosby	Earle Ludgin	Lawrence M. C. Smith
Richard F. Bach	Daniel S. Defenbacher	Stanley Marcus	James Thrall Soby
Alfred H. Barr, Jr.	George H. Fitch	William M. Milliken	Eloise Spaeth
Sidney Berkowitz	Lloyd Goodrich	Grace L. McC. Morley	Francis Henry Taylor
Robert Woods Bliss	René d'Harnoncourt	Elizabeth S. Navas	Emily Hall Tremain
Paul Hyde Bonner	Bartlett H. Hayes, Jr.	Roy R. Neuberger	Hudson D. Walker
Leslie Cheek, Jr.	Henry R. Hope	Thomas Brown Rudd	John Walker
			Suzette M. Zurcher

# MAGAZINE OF ART

May, 1953 Volume 46 Number 5

---

**Editorial: Valedictory** 194

James Johnson Sweeney **Antoni Gaudi** 195

George L. K. Morris **European Whistle-Stops** 206

W. G. Constable **The Birth of Modern Painting  
as Exemplified in Landscape** 211

Franz Kline 218

Justine M. Cordwell **Naturalism and Stylization  
in Yoruba Art** 220

Ernesto Rogers **Max Bill** 226

**A Forum of Critics** 231

**Resolution** 233

**Contributors** 233

**Film Review: Conspiracy in Kyōtō** 234

**Editor:**

Robert Goldwater

**Managing Editor:**

Helen M. Franc

**Editorial Assistant:**

Elaine L. Johnson

**Design:**

Harry Ford

**Circulation & Subscriptions:**

Suzanne Roll

**Advertising & Production:**

June Novick

**Offices:**

22 East 60th Street  
New York City 22

**Book Reviews:** Pierre Francastel, *Peinture et Société: Naissance et destruction d'un espace plastique*, reviewed by EDGAR KAUFMANN, JR.; Walter Friedlaender, *David to Delacroix*, reviewed by GEORGE BOAS; Germain Seligman, *Oh! Fickle Taste or Objectivity in Art*, reviewed by JOHN COOLIDGE; Julie Braun-Vogelstein, *Art the Image of the West*, reviewed by JACQUES BARZUN; Vordemberge-Gildewart, *Epoque néerlandaise*, reviewed by LIBBY TANNENBAUM; Henry H. Saylor, *Dictionary of Architecture; Liberal Arts Dictionary in English, French, German, Spanish*, edited by Mario A. Pei and Frank Gaynor, reviewed by ADOLF K. PLACZEK; Emerson H. Swift, *Roman Sources of Christian Art*, reviewed by BLANCHE R. BROWN; Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1915*, reviewed by CARL BRIDENBAUGH 234

**Latest Books Received** 242

**Index: Volume 46, January through May, 1953** 243

**Cover:** Antoni Gaudi, Detail of pinnacle, Church of the Holy Family, Barcelona (see pages 198 ff.)

## VALEDICTORY

WITH this issue *MAGAZINE OF ART* suspends publication. Volume I, Number 1, appeared in November, 1909, published in Washington under the auspices of The American Federation of Arts. Now, after forty-four years, during which the magazine has continued without a break, we are forced—temporarily at least—to withdraw and to interrupt what has been a living and therefore changing tradition.

Publication over this almost half century has not always been easy. During the years of the second World War, especially, the magazine, in common with other periodicals, suffered from the short supply of materials, manpower and transportation that could be spared for cultural concerns. But though it had to accept delay, and though rising costs forced curtailment in size and in the number of issues published annually, *MAGAZINE OF ART* continued to appear.

In the course of its forty-six volumes, the magazine, like American art over the same years, has gone through many changes. It began as a news organ, and quite naturally as an exponent of the genteel tradition, which looked then, especially from the semi-official perspective of Washington, as if it were the central stream of American art. Since that time, the wide diversification of styles and the embattled opinions that have come to the defense of each of them, the varied ways in which contemporary art fits—and does not fit—into the scheme of things has not made editorial choice and judgment any easier. It has above all, probably fortunately, made it impossible to conceive of chasing that journalistic will-o'-the-wisp, the keeping happy of every potential reader. Nevertheless we believe that the magazine has responded, sometimes belatedly, but more often with promptness, to the changing perspectives of modern views upon the past, and to the live and shifting currents of contemporary creation.

*MAGAZINE OF ART* has always been published at a financial loss. A large measure of subsidy has always been needed, and in the past has been found. It has come from the trustees of The American Federation of Arts, from the Carnegie Foundation, from large individual gifts, and on at least two occasions from our subscribers. Today such subvention is in smaller proportion than in the past. Nevertheless, the sums necessary to make ends meet can no longer be found, and faced with a continuing deficit the magazine has no other course but to suspend. For commercial publishing this would be reason enough. For *MAGAZINE OF ART*, we come to this decision with the greater reluctance because we never have earned our way, but with the greater

conviction because we believe that we never should; that journals such as ours will continue to need subvention; and that like universities, like museums, like art itself, this requirement is a proper part of their vital existence.

The present situation only makes us more appreciative of the generous possibilities of the past. That generosity has shown itself in direct financial aid, and also by other gifts, unrecorded in account books, but no less essential for all that to the functioning of the magazine: by the energetic and devoted cooperation of an Editorial Board whose members have given time and thought and care to the approximation of an ideal magazine and to the solution of its practical problems; and by the magazine's authors, who in accepting their token payments for contributions (all that the magazine could "afford") have chosen to pretend that theirs was not really a labor of love.

We still believe that there is a need—that there is a crying need—for such a journal as *MAGAZINE OF ART*. There is need in our overly verbal culture for all the other writing about the arts, from the specialized journals of art history and of philosophical esthetics, to the reviews of current events and the activities of the market place. In a country where the arts are neglected, all these contribute to our immediate visual culture, and some of them help to build our lasting tradition in the arts. But there is need too for the kind of journal that *MAGAZINE OF ART* has at least tried to be—an independent journal of opinion for which art is neither a fact considered under the sign of eternity, nor an item culled from a release box; a magazine whose goal is to marry history and esthetics, and knowledge of the past with a conviction about the present; an absolutely independent magazine that is responsive to the contemporary situation without being a news magazine and is steeped in the visual arts without ignoring literature and music.

This is the magazine we have had in mind. Had our success been more complete the auditor would still have told us that "it does not pay for itself." Of course his subtracting machine would be right. But cultural projects have never paid for themselves; and it is hard to believe that in this country at the present time there is no room for journals—whether of art, or literature, or music—which are responsible to more than the auditor's machine alone, and whose returns, however intangible and indirect, are real and of vital importance to contemporary American culture.

James Thrall Soby  
Robert Goldwater

*MAGAZINE OF ART*





## ANTONI GAUDI

*James Johnson Sweeney*

JOHN Ruskin, in the appendix to the second edition of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, published in 1855, stated that he had finally come to the realization that "the architect who was not a sculptor or a painter was nothing better than a frame-maker on a large scale." Having once got this clue to the truth, he continued, "every question about architecture settled itself without further difficulty. I saw the idea of an independent architectural profession was a mere modern fallacy, the thought of which had never so much as entered the heads of the great nations of earlier times; but that it had always, till lately, been understood, that in order to have a Parthenon, one had to have a preliminary Phidias; and to have a Cathedral of Florence, a preliminary Giotto; and to have a St. Peter's in Rome, a preliminary Michelangelo." And he added a footnote: "The name by which the architect of Cologne

Cathedral is designated in the contracts for the work is 'magister lapicida,'—the 'master stone-cutter'; and I believe this was the usual Latin term throughout the Middle Ages." Again, in the appendix of Ruskin's *Edinburgh Lectures* (1854), we read: "This is a universal law. No person who is not a great sculptor and painter can be an architect. If he is not a sculptor and painter he can only be a builder."

This concept of the architect is a key to the essential contribution of the architect Antoni Gaudi. It helps us to understand his work in a way that the purely historical approach never could. It helps us to a distinction between Gaudi's achievement and the products of the *Art Nouveau* movement of fifty years ago with which it is so

*Pinnacles of Church of the Holy Family looking down from spires, photograph Stanley Twardowicz*

commonly confused. It opens the way to a fuller understanding of the potential contributions of his work to architecture and city planning today. Finally, through such an approach to Gaudi's work, we are brought into immediate consideration of certain basic features which at once relate and differentiate vital creations in the arts of sculpture and architecture.

Few if any architects of Gaudi's importance to the contemporary period during the last hundred years have suffered from the same lack of comprehension that Gaudi has. For more than half a century his architecture has been a focus for protest, ridicule and praise on both the soberest and the most fantastic grounds. Gaudi has been regarded as at once a gothic revivalist, a Churrigueresque, a prototype of *Art Nouveau*, a precursor of surrealism, an engineer gifted beyond the opportunities of his materials, and as a fanatic, religious vulgarian. Yet for all the superficial strangeness on which these apparently conflicting estimates have been based, his work today—for its essential qualities and its potential contribution to art in general, and architecture in particular—enjoys the recognition of such disparate leaders in his own field as the Swiss, Le Corbusier, or the Finn, Alvar Aalto, and even the enthusiasm of such a one-time advocate of architectural austerity as Siegfried Giedion. And his unfinished Church of the Holy Family in Barcelona has taken on the character of a symbol of that city, as the Eiffel Tower has for Paris.

But in spite of this recognition on the part of a handful of leaders, the fact remains that popular misconceptions still interfere with the wide appreciation that Gaudi's work deserves on the grounds of its importance for us in this period.

How to place Gaudi's work satisfactorily in an historical or evolutionary frame of reference with that of his immediate architect predecessors, either regional or European, has always been a problem. Nikolaus Pevsner, for example, in discussing the architecture of the late nineteenth century in his survey, *Pioneers of Modern Design*, writes of Gaudi in a footnote: "He remained from the beginning of his career to his very death so much an outsider, with a background so different from that of any other pioneers of the late nineteenth century, that one remains embarrassed whenever one tries to allot him an historical place." The difficulty for Northern Europeans in placing Gaudi's work historically is possibly one ground of misunderstanding, and Pevsner's statement is an evidence of it.

Another source of misunderstanding is the confusion of his work, on the grounds of superficial resemblances, with that decorative movement in the arts that flourished so widely in Europe during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first few years of the present one under various names—*Modern Stil*, *Jugendstil* and *Art Nouveau*. Because Gaudi employed the dec-

orative idiom that was in the air at the period so successfully, the decorative aspect of his work has been mistaken for the whole. The surface decorator has been recognized, and the architect, builder and sculptor in Gaudi's work overlooked.

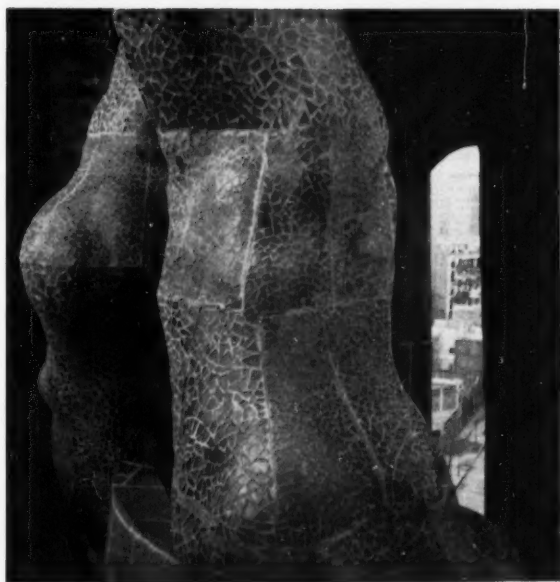
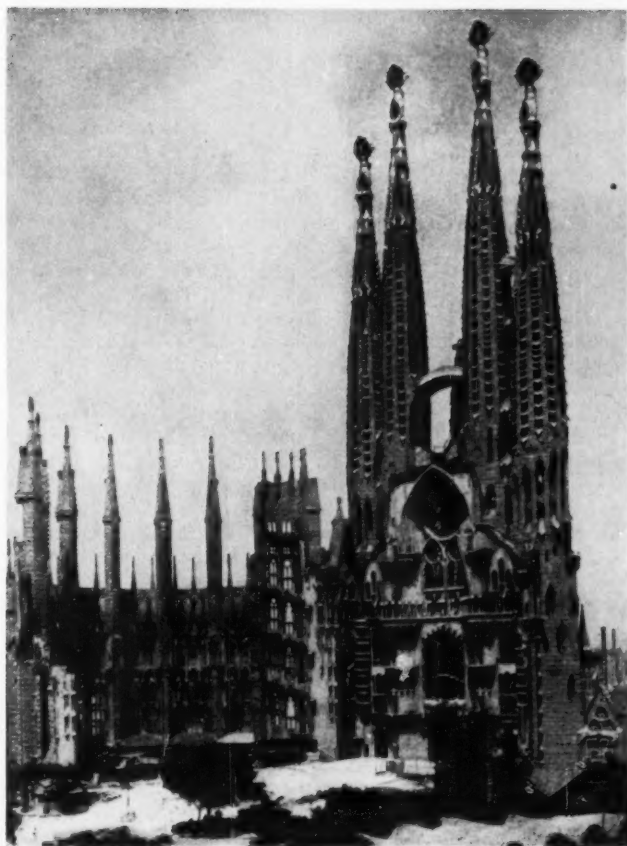
Finally, as a consequence of these basic misconceptions, Gaudi's work has enjoyed a renown primarily as a curiosity—the work of a fantasist. This has been the most common attitude not only on the part of lay visitors to Barcelona over the last thirty years, but also most frequently among architects themselves. And even Salvador Dali, the surrealist admirer of Gaudi, for all his genuine appreciation of his fellow Catalan's importance and contribution, has encouraged this popular misconception by the characteristic manner in which he expressed his enthusiasm in an article written in 1932 for the Paris review *Mino-taure*, entitled "*The Terrifying and Comestible Beauty of the 'Modern Style'.*"

But Gaudi's architectural contribution is both less and more than all these misconceptions allow. His work offers less of the "anachronism" and "frantic concoctions" the limited North European view sees in it; less of the curiosity and "comestibility" the sophisticate strains to find; and more as an object lesson from the architect who, perhaps more than any other in the nineteenth century, recognized the lost structural principles of the gothic—who recovered them and re-emphasized these principles for the building of today and tomorrow, and at the same time revived a creative stress on the associational and imaginative factors of architectural expression. And finally, in his work we find the recovery of that fundamental fusion of the sculptor-architect's view, which conceives a building as more than a mere functional shelter, and a city as more than a collection of such buildings—but both as organisms creating and meeting esthetic demands beyond mere practical or serviceable needs.

Actually the historical place of Gaudi is not difficult to fix, if we approach his work without preconceived notions of what it should be. We have only to take his own stated point of view as quoted by his French admirer Marius-Ary Leblond, to realize the point in architectural evolution where he felt the main thread should be picked up once again. "Arab art," Leblond quotes him as saying in discussing his native Catalan heritage, "was an art of plunderers. As for the romanesque and the Byzantine, proceeding scientifically from Roman canons—they have long retarded the development of the art. The gothic is sublime, but incomplete; it is only a beginning, stopped outright by the deplorable renaissance. Today," he concluded, "we must not imitate, or reproduce, but *continue* the gothic, at the same time rescuing it from the flamboyant." For the gothic, he felt, "had squandered all its ingenuity towards making its impotence flourish."

Here we hit on the point that was perhaps

*Incomplete Church of the Holy Family, Barcelona, view from interior towards east portal*



*Details of decorative forms for façade of Church of the Holy Family, sheathed with glass mosaic and intended to be illuminated from within, photograph Stanley Twardowicz*

one of the keys to Gaudí's interest in gothic architecture, and certainly the key to the ideology and the vitality of associations he brought to his personalization of it. At the same time it is a point that might pardonably escape those not familiar with the obstinacy of nationalism in Catalonia and its traditions. For a Catalan architect such as Gaudí, the renaissance style of architecture was ineradicably associated with Catalonia's loss of its independence to Castile. At the period when Ferdinand and Isabella succeeded in the political unification of the Iberian peninsula, gothic was the style of Catalonia. With the decline of Catalan power and its impoverishment in its subordination to Castile, architecture declined. So when a nationalistic revival began to assert itself, gothic architecture naturally came to symbolize "the national architecture," just as it had in England at the period of the gothic revival there—but with much more justification in Spain. And particularly so there, because of the essentially ecclesiastical character of gothic. Strangely enough, in Spain, ever since the middle of the nineteenth century until the first decade of our own, the Catalan nationalist movement was right wing and closely associated with the Roman Catholic Church.

While this association of gothic style and Catalan nationalism in the nineteenth century gives us one key to Gaudí's enthusiasm for a development of the essentials of this type of building, from the point at which it had been abandoned, into the architectural idiom of his own day, there was certainly another deeper appeal: the appeal to Gaudí as builder and as artist. It was as a builder, primarily, that Gaudí envisaged the continuation of the gothic ideals from the point at which the renaissance in Spain began to eclipse them—but using the new materials and the new techniques with which his own day had provided him. At the same time, as an artist he was drawn back to the concept of the gothic architect as sculptor.

Antoni Gaudí i Cornet was born June 25th, 1852 in the city of Reus, in the province of Tarragona, sixty-six miles southwest of Barcelona. His father was a coppersmith by trade. And perhaps, as Luis Bonet i Gari, one of Gaudí's assistants in his later years, suggests, the experience of watching his craftsman father at work may have made it seem more natural to the architect Gaudí to attempt to solve his structural problems in actual three-dimensional models, rather than by the more usual method of drawn plans where the third dimension is suggested on a flat surface. In any case, Gaudí's interest in interrelating forms in space, and in the intersection of forms in space, is the key to his contribution as architect-builder.

And undoubtedly Gaudí as a builder was influenced by his early environment. In the countryside around Reus he could not fail to have been impressed by the well-built walls of stone and brick, by the Roman arches which still survive

today, by the Roman bridges and aqueducts. He was born and grew up in a land where good building was a tradition.

It is likely that Gaudí's vision of form—the vision of form of a simple man closely bound to his native countryside—was also deeply conditioned by the clear light of the Mediterranean coast, which accentuates the three-dimensional values and sculptural quality of all objects it falls on. As he often said in his later years, Gaudí wanted his architecture to be "Mediterranean." He believed that geographical factors played a large role in the character of his work. "Let us think," he used to say, "what it means to be Mediterranean. It means to be equidistant from the blinding light of the tropics and from the northern light which creates ghosts. We are brothers to the Italians; and this makes us more apt for creative (plastic) work." Again he would explain: "The Catalans have a natural sense of plasticity which gives them this admirable clarity, and because of this, real objects do not mislead Mediterranean peoples, but instruct them."

It is perhaps this Mediterranean quality that comes home to us most forcefully in his great unfinished Church of the Holy Family. Here is not only the sculptural quality of the mass, which Gaudí felt was a heritage of the Mediterranean artist. In the details of the façade, we recognize also his interest in the fauna and flora of the Mediterranean shores; and not only the reminiscences





of the plant, animal and shell forms, but the water rhythms and the terrain effects, too—for example, a definite suggestion of the neighboring Montserrat, the sacred mountain, so intimately a part of the spiritual life of all Catalans.

And here we come to another point that helps us to give the popular associations of Gaudí's architecture with *Art Nouveau* decoration their proper place. For both styles were fundamentally products of the romantic revival's interest in nature, which had awakened in England almost contemporaneously, and perhaps slightly in advance, of the gothic revival. The interest in nature led to the so-called English natural garden, and eventually to an interest in natural rather than stylized forms. Nature and the natural garden led to a rationalization of the new taste. "The natural gardener," as Stephen Switzer wrote as early as 1718, in *Iconographica rustica*, "will not insist on some mathematical pattern with pedantic obstinacy," but "will make his design submit to nature and not nature to his design." And for Hogarth, as he expressed it in the frontispiece of *The Analysis of Beauty*, a serpentine line was "the line of beauty." "The art of composing well is the art of varying well," he wrote; and the esthetic value of intricacy—the sort of enjoyment one gets "in winding walks and serpentine rivers" all entered into his concept of intricacy in form, which, he felt, from the pleasure it gives the mind, "entitles it to the name of beautiful."

One has only to compare Jefferson's serpentine wall at the University of Virginia, very likely inspired by Hogarth's *Analysis*, which Jefferson had in his library, with the bench balustrade of Gaudí's English Garden, the Parc Güell in Barcelona, or the roof of the Mila House, to see Gaudí's clear derivation from this romantic revival background; just as the *Art Nouveau* of France, Belgium and England had its roots in a similar interest in exploiting natural forms.

Undoubtedly there is a surface similarity between certain details of Gaudí's work and many *Art Nouveau* and *Jugendstil* expressions found in Northern Europe—for example, early work by Hector Guimard in Paris or that of Baron Horta in Brussels, to take two of the better-known examples. But the *Art Nouveau* of Horta and Guimard was essentially decoration. It was a surface treatment, as we see in the well-known stairway of Horta's house in the former rue de Turin, Brussels—a decorative application of rhythmic forms copied, or adapted from nature; just as we find similar decorative motives in Gaudí's even earlier ironwork, such as the doors of the Güell House of 1883.

Gaudí's mature interest in natural forms, however, was to become quite other than merely decorative; in his later work it was to become essentially structural. Nature for Gaudí was not merely foliage, or tendrils to spread over a bare wall, or the surface movements of flowing water

Opposite: Serpentine wall after Thomas Jefferson's design, University of Virginia, photograph Ewing Galloway

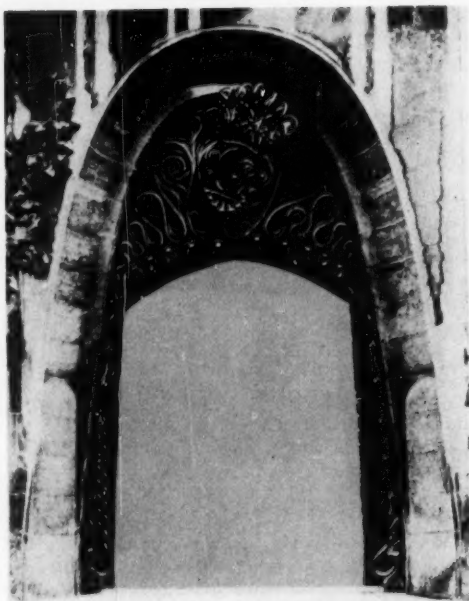


Terrace seats enclosing upper level of Parc Güell, 1900-14

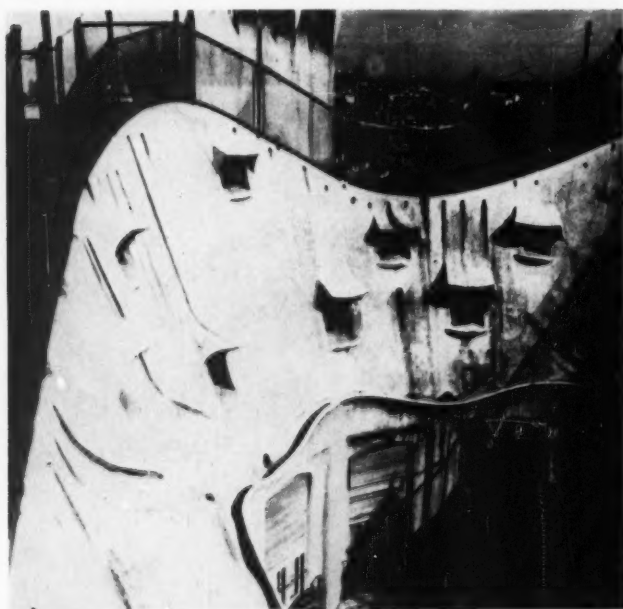
to scarf a human figure. It was the natural forces beneath these surface expressions. He spoke of warped surfaces, of stresses and thrusts, of columns branching like trees and of the strength of the twisted form of human thighs or shin bones. Here he was once again close to Hogarth's theory of fitness and its relation to the "line of beauty," with his example of the S-line in the sturdy calves of eighteenth-century Irish chair-carriers.

Gaudi's interest in nature, in other words, was in three-dimensional forms, rather than in the two-dimensional, or at most bas-relief, characteristics of orthodox *Art Nouveau*. He turned to nature for his inspiration, as those designers did; but he was interested primarily in nature's inner forces, which expressed themselves on the surface, rather than in the strictly surface expressions. We see this in the tilted columns and the "warped" walls supporting the roof of his chapel in the Colony Güell, or the doorway and column of his Mila House. Here is the interest of the sculptor and architect, in contradistinction to the architect-decorator—whether we see the latter's work in the traceried work of King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England, in a gothic revival fan-vaulting such as Walpole's Strawberry Hill, or in the flattened liernes of Horta's rue de Turin interior.

Gaudi probably never learned much about building in the academic architectural school in Barcelona, where he received his degree. He was never a satisfactory student. But what he learned of history from independent reading in the school



Cast-iron overdoor for Güell House, Barcelona, 1883



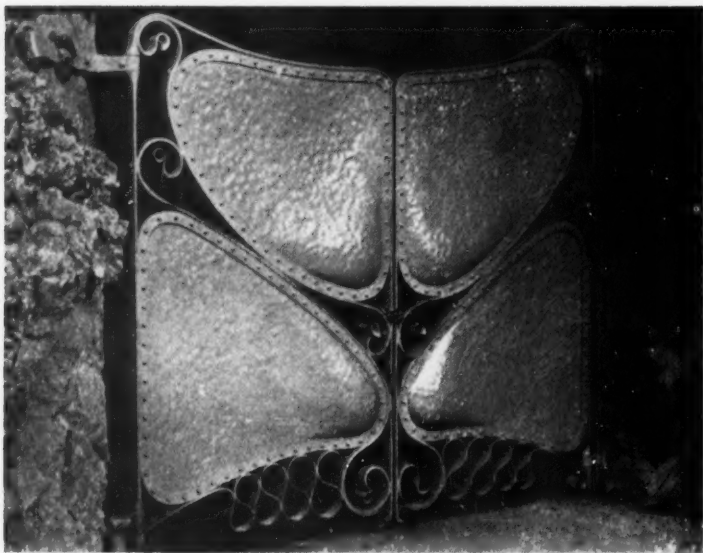
Roof of Mila House towards interior courtyard





Covered underpass of lower level of Parc Güell, showing rusticated stone buttresses overgrown with trunks and vines supporting upper terrace, photographs Stanley Twardowicz





library whetted his curiosity. Probably the great influence of his early years was that of Viollet-le-Duc, but it was never the historicist in Viollet-le-Duc that held him. It was the logic of Viollet's *Entretiens*. It was the thinker laying sound foundations for tomorrow's building, and not the antiquarian looking back at yesterday's, who attracted his admiration. And that is the value Gaudi's own work has for us today.

The building with which we are most familiar in reproduction may seem fantastic out of its setting, but dominating the corner of a broad avenue in Barcelona, the Mila House provides a gracious relief from the stiff, self-conscious, formalized buildings around it—different, without oppressing its neighbors. The decorative cast iron on its balconies in turn relieves its character of a sea-washed cliff, giving it that natural variety somewhat in Hogarth's sense. The dominating sculptured chimneys on the roof at once weigh down the mass and at the same time unify it into an aspiring whole and seem to lift it from the street.

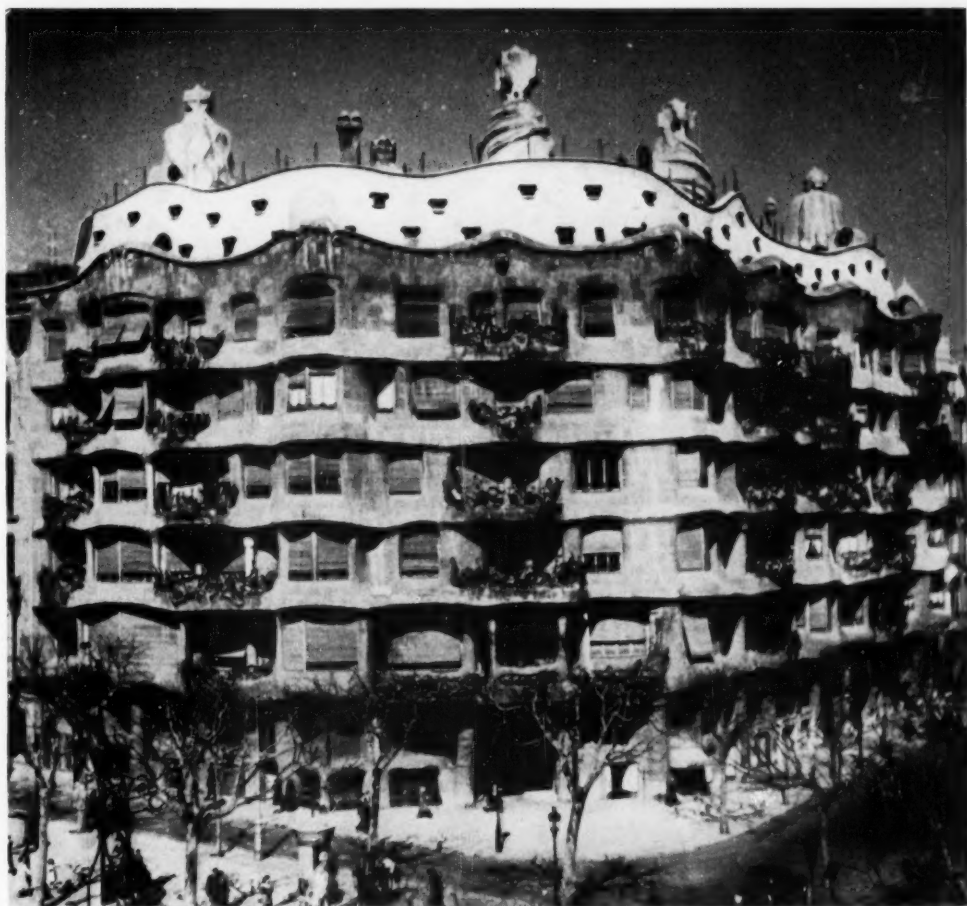
Those "tender doors of calf's liver" of which Salvador Dali wrote in "*The Terrifying and Comestible Beauty of the 'Modern Style'*" are actually handsome and simple designs in ironwork, at which Gaudi and his colleagues—notably Josep Jujol—were master craftsmen. They are not the nightmare expressions one would expect from Dali's evocative description. Their simplicity and rightness, without any too assertive form associations, offer an example for contemporary design.

The decorative compositions of the Parc Güell and of the market-place ceiling underneath

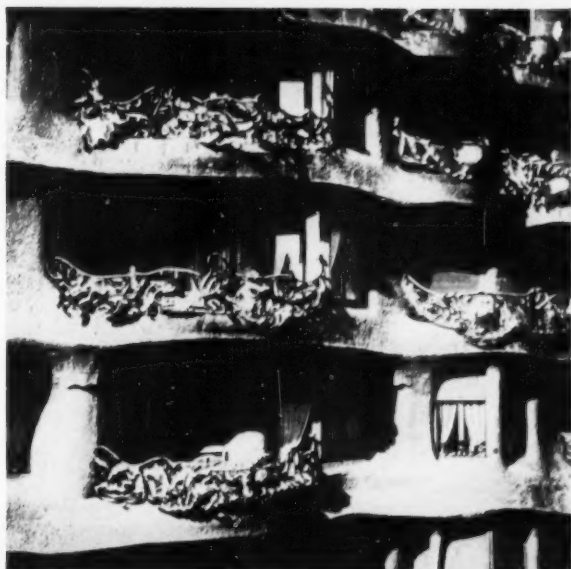


Crypt of Colonia Güell chapel showing tilted columns and Gaudi's characteristic warped surfaces

it, for all their anticipation of cubist *collage* and Schwitter's *merz*bild, have a sound *raison d'être* as well as an esthetic justification. Tile is the most practical surfacing in a climate such as Barcelona's. Here Gaudi used fragments of traditional tiles of the country. In their original character, they have a freedom of design of a mixed representational character; but their format is relatively monotonous. In Gaudi's use of the fragments, the monotony of the shape of the tile is overcome, while the advantages of color and surface protec-



Opposite, above: Ironwork doors of Parc Güell, Barcelona, described by Dalí as "tender doors of calf's liver" (from *Minotaure*, Paris, 1932). Above: Façade of Mila House, Barcelona, 1905-10. Right: Cast-iron balconies of façade of Mila House, possibly designed by Josep Jujol under Gaudí's supervision





Chimney of Mila House  
faced with glass mosaic

tion remain. And in addition there is a gain in intricacy in Hogarth's terms—and a gain in beauty.

The little parochial school, Gaudí's last finished work, has a naturalist and Mediterranean link in its billowing forms and its evident echo of the rolling hills around Barcelona.

In 1857, Ruskin, speaking to the Architectural Association, said: "The furnace and the forge shall be at your service; you shall draw out your plates of glass and beat out your bars of iron, till you have encompassed us all—if your style is of the practical kind—with endless perspectives of black skeleton and blinding square. . . . And still I ask you, what after this?"

Ruskin's question is perhaps equally pertinent today. As a result of the headlong advance in technics and scientific accomplishments during the last century and a half, there has been a notable disregard in many quarters for the other aspects of architecture. There is today a feeling among certain architects, that of late years the expressive or collective side of architecture—architecture, in short, that is art—has been neglected in favor of its technical side. Whether or not we subscribe to this view, we cannot deny that it is current. The kind of phrases going about are "the need for a new monumentality," "the humanization of modern architecture" and "putting content back into art." In other words, there is a feeling of the need to stress once again the sculptural side of architecture—architecture as a unit of expression as well as a unit of construction.

Perhaps Le Corbusier has given the answer to Ruskin's question in his hint: "Friends, nature says to us 'psst-psst!'" And in his treatment of

architecture as sculpture, Gaudí had already anticipated this solution. For, like Ruskin, Gaudí "felt convinced of the necessity, in order to aid its progress, of some determined effort to extricate from the confused mass of tradition and dogma with which [architecture had] become encumbered during imperfect, or restricted practice, those large principles of right which are applicable to every stage and style of it." Both Gaudí and Ruskin felt that architecture, "uniting," as Ruskin put it, "the technical and imaginative elements as essentially as humanity does the soul and body, —shows the same infirmly balanced liability to the prevalence of the lower part over the higher to the interference of the constructive, with the purity and simplicity of the reflective element." And Gaudí, in giving the sculptural aspect of architecture once more its due regard, pointed the road forward, more than half a century in advance of Le Corbusier's recent writings on the necessity for fusing sculpture, painting and architecture.

Gaudí, however, in his first turn to nature for the sculptured figures on the façade of his Church of the Holy Family, lost sight of one main point—that which makes the essential difference between architecture and sculpture, and at the same time binds them into a single major expression with two contrasted faces: the question of scale. For paradoxically enough, what gives sculpture its monumentality dwarfs one's architectural conception. Architecture can achieve an effect of monumentality only by scrupulously observing its basic human measure, or module—by constantly returning to it for reference. Sculpture, on the contrary, achieves its expression of monumentality

through a suggestion of the immeasurable—by avoiding any exhaustively factual or obviously measurable representation of natural forms. Architecture fails esthetically to move us whenever it disregards the human module. It should be built essentially around and for man. Sculpture, on the contrary, when closely tied to the human being through naturalistic representation, is at once dwarfed, and for the very reason that it is seen as measurable. It becomes a simulacrum of which we know the limits: we feel them with our muscles, even as we read them with our eyes. We dwarf such assertively naturalistic sculpture in our ability to feel its measurements, just as the architecturally gigantesque dwarfs us because we cannot feel its measurements. Measure, in architecture, is the source of comfort; in sculpture, it is the suggestion of unmeasurability that releases the imagination. The combination of truly monumental sculpture with architecture therefore provides a fusion of two contrary approaches to the same esthetic goal, allowing the total expression to go beyond the limitations of either constituent. Gaudí, in his first endeavor to solve the dilemma he recognized in his architecture, unfortunately

failed to realize this. His first work for the façade of the Church of the Holy Family—three versions of an angel—were copied photographically after a living model. Sometimes his sculpture for this church was even cast from nature in his studio, then simplified in finishing.

But in his final work for the Mila House and in the last studies for the Church of the Holy Family, he steadily found his way back to that mysterious sense of scale—in his chimneys, for example. Nature in these late, highly abstracted sculptures is, however, never forgotten: for example its stresses and the vitality of its branching forms. Imagination shows itself through suggestion that is not dwarfed by the naturalistic module. Monumentality is present in detail as well as in the total structure.

Gaudí was not only a sculptor-architect but was also one of the most venturesome sculptors of our period. At the same time, in fusing decorative color, sculpture and architecture into one evocative unit, he points to a route that lies ahead not only for the architect, painter and sculptor, but for the town planner and city builder as well.



*Right: Interior of studio adjoining Church of the Holy Family, showing casts of figures for its façade. Above: Angel for façade of Church of the Holy Family*



**Note:** Except where sources are otherwise indicated, all photographs are from Arxiu Gomis-Prats, Barcelona



# EUROPEAN WHISTLE- STOPS

*George L. K. Morris*

LET me begin by paying brief homage to the United States Information Service, of which I had never even heard previous to my trip. Our government may be callous about culture at home, but it has concluded that foreigners should be informed that America is devoted to other pursuits besides the production of tanks and frigidares. Most large cities of the free world, therefore, are now provided with a USIS building, complete with exhibition hall and library. (I shall always remember the rotund German whom I saw trundling down the steps in Munich with *The Late George Apley* under his arm.) The plastic arts are admittedly difficult to disseminate; the cultural officers who establish connections between an "exchanged person" and his potential audience led me to believe, during several stops, that the little box of color slides which I carried to illustrate my lecture had come in answer to their prayers.

In Milan, to which I went immediately on the conclusion of the final Unesco session, my first lecture took place in a sort of combination library and art gallery known as the *Bibliofila*. I was told to talk in English, which was a relief, as I am hardly a confident public speaker in any language. It was a blow, therefore, when it became apparent that no one in the audience spoke English, and everything was switched to French. I doubt if many in the audience understood French, either, although there were some restrained titters over the translation I employed for "Ashcan School." My slides traced the history of American art from Indian textiles and early primitives down to cur-

**Note:** In September, 1952, George L. K. Morris was a delegate to the first Unesco Conference of Artists, Writers and Musicians held at Venice. He spent the following month traveling under the Department of State's "exchange of persons" program, with the double assignment of telling the Europeans something about American art and of reporting back to Washington on what he saw. The following article deals principally with the second aspect of his trip.



Michael Tzombas (Athens), *Symbol*, red marble

rent abstractions. Interestingly enough, in Europe there is never a "question period," so essential a postlude to any educational dissertation in the United States.

After the lecture, which was attended by many artists, I was able to inquire about Milan as an art center. It seems that Milan and Rome are of about equal importance, and there is intense rivalry between them. Personal investigation in both cities, however, was to prove difficult, as in Italy the season does not begin until November. The commercial galleries were closed, and in Milan the new museum of contemporary art is still under construction. My efforts therefore had to be concentrated upon visiting artists in their studios.

Italy has only recently "discovered" abstract art, which after an abortive futurist beginning was prohibited under the Fascists—although a few Italians such as Magnelli had become important in the School of Paris. It is natural, therefore, that the modern movements should not be fully developed as yet. But the enthusiasm of discovery is still in the air, and the work often has a clarity and freshness that comes like a nostalgic reminder of the 'thirties in New York.

The painter Dorfles took me in tow and helped me with my visiting schedule. Dorfles is interesting as a painter and is the best writer on



modern art in Milan. He arranged for me to see two dealers' galleries which were not yet officially open. Of the larger, *Il Milione*, I had often heard; it seemed to feature Morandi, whose coolly depicted bottles I have always found rather short on quality. There were others from the "gallery group," most of them in an abstract direction, painted loosely and over-lush in color, which seems to be an Italian characteristic.

The first studio I visited was that of Munari, who at first glance seems to follow the tradition of *De Stijl*; but his interest lies further in the advance and recession of planes, and in the possibilities for "double focus"—that is, planes that seem to shift their position according to the juxtaposition. Munari also executes bold, translucent sculptures from a material resembling fly-screens. The most talented Milanese painter I felt to be Reggiani, whose severe abstractions are very flatly conceived. He had been in Paris before the war, so had not suffered from the Fascist restrictions. I also met Monnet, Soldati and Marino Marini, whose work was for me less interesting.

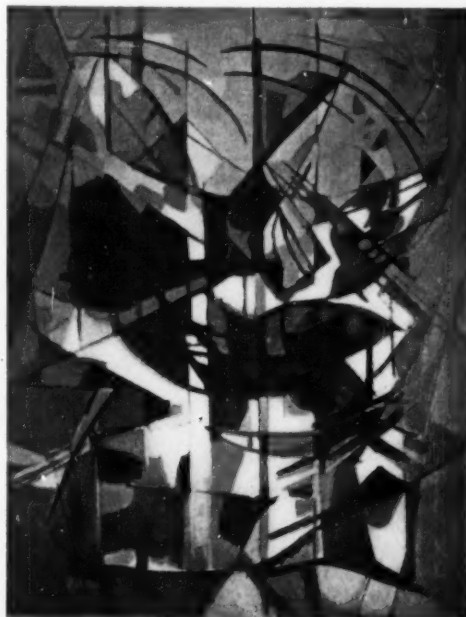
My next stop was Rome, where I had to spend the whole first day in preparing an Italian text for my lecture. At its conclusion, I met many of the Roman artists and also Dr. Bucarelli, director of Rome's museum of modern art. The following day she treated me to a complete survey of the contemporary works she had been buying in recent years. They were carried up by men in overalls from their usual repository in the cellar. The important fact was, however, that the purchases had been made, despite every sort of opposition from Ministers of State. Nearly all were abstract, and several were expressively distinguished: Vedova (from Venice), Scropo (from Turin), Tatafiore, Guerrini, Corpora, Santomaso, Birolli. One of the best was Pizzinato, but Dr. Bucarelli added that the example I saw had been painted several years before, and that this artist is now a Communist and "the worst of all."

My first studio visit lent force to her remarks. The artist (let us call him *Ignoto*) seemed to be in bed at the appointed hour (noon); but after twenty minutes of audible snorts and groans, he finally opened the door. Inside were some bold and untidy abstractions, but the studio was dominated by his latest work—an immense representation of a victory celebration over Moscow, with rockets, airplanes and Kremlin towers interlocked in an incompetent jumble. *Ignoto* then accompanied me to the studios of Savelli and the sculptor Consagra, both of whom seemed very serious (and non-political). This was the first time I had ever visited studios in a wholesale manner, and I may say that it proved exhausting beyond anticipation. After inspecting more than fifty works in rapid succession, the mind grows thoroughly numb, and the mere sight of an artist opening up a fat portfolio of drawings after four P.M. will send the most hardened gallery-goer into a paroxysm.

Other painters I visited were Regina, Falzoni—who follows a surrealist direction—and Dorazio, who at the moment is working on large, Mirò-dominated canvases. Dorazio, however, is one of the most talented and will probably soon work through his reminiscences. He took me to a small gallery, *Age d'Or*, run by a sculptor whose constructions, influenced by Arp, seemed better than anything else that he handled. The gallery publishes a magazine, *Arti Visive*, and seems to provide a center for the Roman *avant-garde*.

It was a surprisingly short flight to Athens, and there one alights into a different stage of cultural development. I had been to Greece before as a student of antique sculpture; when investigating one's contemporaries, the atmosphere becomes very different. It was surprising, for instance, to find oneself in a country where there are many serious painters and a huge art school—but no picture gallery of any kind. The sculpture museum is, of course, the greatest of all; but when it comes to paintings, the director showed me two El Grecos (?) and a nineteenth-century Greek academic work—the entire national collection—which he keeps in a closet because there is no place to hang them. There are no dealers, and only one collector, who buys a single example of practically everybody. Almost as distressing, there is no money for the importation of exhibitions. A few artists have studied in Western Europe; the rest see no paintings at all, except for a huge

Antonio Corpora (Rome), *Nets*, 1952, oil



exhibition that takes place every winter. Here they can see one another's work, but the few good ones become swamped in the flood.

Perhaps for this reason, my Athens lecture seemed to be the most appreciated in the series. (This despite the fact that I talked through an interpreter, which dragged it out interminably.) In Greece, there is a strong desire to *see* modern art, and lacking originals, color slides seemed the nearest approach. The Beaux-Arts hall was large, yet the crowd made it impossible to close the doors and was massed far out in the street.

The Greek painters are the most difficult to visit. To begin with, two of the leaders are complete recluses. The best known is Parthenis, who has seen no one, except his daughter, for ten years. I was, however, shown a dozen of his paintings in a private collection (Mantzounis). Parthenis maintains a distinguished quality when he sticks to impressionist landscapes; when he tries to be "modern," he becomes quite superficial. I found him strangely reminiscent of Arthur B. Davies. The other important recluse is Bouzianis, to whose abode I was taken by the publisher Patsiphos (associate of the "Colossus of Maroussi" made famous by Henry Miller). The only way of announcing one's presence to Bouzianis is to throw stones against his closed shutters. For forty minutes we listened to punctuated imprecations while he was deciding whether to let us in. Finally he opened his door, and we were invited into an unexpected world of German expressionism; the painter had evidently studied close to Lovis Corinth. Unhappily, after the initial impact there was little development—a pertinent example of the isolation of Greece.

The greatest hope for modern Greek art had been the sculptor Tombros. Many years ago he had gone to Paris, where he worked as an assistant to Rodin. Before 1920, Tombros was exhibiting with all the modern sculptors—Branconi, Maillol, Laurens and the rest—and his work stood up admirably next to theirs. When he decided to return to his native land and to show his work there, everyone considered him insane. No one in Athens would look even at his more conventional portraits, for which he had also great talent. So he was forced to abandon all traces of modernism and to concentrate on banal monuments of heroes, with every button in place.

The best-known Greek painter, Ghikas, lives in Paris, where I had often seen his work. Vasileu is reminiscent of Ghikas, although pseudo-primitive rather than in the abstract direction. It was in his studio that I became tellingly conscious of what I had been told—that the past exerts a heavy barrier against the development of modern art in Athens. It had been a rainy afternoon. While we were looking at Vasileu's work, the sun broke through an overcast sky. From his window I caught a glimpse of the Parthenon, lit by the sunset, silhouetted against the huge blue-black



John Moralis (*Kiphissia*), *Female Figures*, 1951, oil

clouds. From then on, it was impossible to concentrate on pictures.

The painter Nicolau puts dashes of Picasso and Matisse into the Byzantine tradition, but as yet the cocktail doesn't mix. The most talented Greek artist, in my estimation, was Moralis, who works in the country at Kephissia. Moralis' power of realization might seem tentative to those used to Western centers, where artists are bolstered by each other and stimulated by new developments, for Moralis moves hesitantly from figure-painting to abstraction. His best work does nevertheless succeed in establishing a quality. His wife, a sculptress, models huge surrealist figures in plaster. I also visited Sochos, a leading sculptor of dull heroic monuments. I was chiefly interested here in the dead tone of freshly cut Pentelic marble. When new, it is as white and textureless as a table top at Childs; the wonderful tawny glow comes only after the stone has been weathered for a thousand years. It is quite understandable why the Greeks painted all their sculpture.

The past in Istanbul does not exert a strangulation comparable to that in Athens. Moreover, Mohammedan traditions and color schemes appear more adjustable to modern times. The artists (and public) experience, however, the same lack of familiarity with the great painting traditions. There is a large museum of contemporary art, which features paintings by nineteenth-century Turks. I was surprised at the development of this superior academic school, reminiscent of Gérôme and equally accomplished. The director of the museum, Halil Dikmen, is himself a sensitive abstract painter, and there are two rooms of recent

works by Turkish abstractionists—Tollu, Kalmik, Neurallah Berk and others. The best known is Bedri Rami (Eyüboğlu), who has studied in Paris. His paintings may seem a bit over-colored to Western eyes, but the textiles in his studio exhibit an authentic oriental modernism. I also saw Kaptan, whose son (aged eight) has achieved renown for his paintings in the pages of *Life* and elsewhere—a tragedy for Kaptan, Sr., who is a serious artist, and who himself gets very little *réclame*.

My most interesting discovery was the small Maya Gallery, upstairs on a back street, which specializes in the Turkish *avant-garde*. I attended a *vernissage* of a young artist, Ferruh Basaga, who has never been to the West and has developed an abstract style that is surprisingly well integrated. His best paintings are severely geometric, his sculpture welded from wildly gesticulating bands of metal. There I encountered many of Turkey's leading literary figures, who—unlike American writers—seem to be interested in modern art.

In Turkey, as in Greece, the need is for artists to see their works in conjunction with those of other countries. This does not seem to be a moment for great primitives anywhere. Also, as in Greece, there are neither collectors nor public as yet interested in contemporary art of any kind. It is worthy of note that, whereas most nations are gravitating culturally towards France and England, Turkish interest and admiration goes to Germany and the United States.

The trip to Vienna was long, and owing to a flight cancellation, one day was lost, so that my investigation of Austria was therefore by no means exhaustive. It was, however, long enough to show me the complete lack of interest in modern art, and the feeble quality of what is being produced. Vienna, like Athens, has no modern museum, except for the moribund *Kunsthau*s, and Austria seems almost equally out of touch with the West. They do, however, get small exhibitions. I attended a show of prints from all over, held at the

*Sezession* gallery, which even contained a Marin etching. The Albertina was exhibiting modern book illustrations (Léger, Rouault and a few Austrians). The only Viennese artist of more than local reputation is the sculptor Wotruba, and Kokoschka's influence still dominates painting. Others of interest were Carl Unger, Arnulf Neu-wirth and Hoffehner. There is less interest in abstract art than in any other country; the painters' imagination seems to gravitate more towards witches and trolls.

The Austrian government is one of several in Europe that has passed a law that two percent of the cost of any new building erected with state funds must go into its embellishment by artists. Unfortunately, there are as yet not many to lend much distinction to the project; but it is heartening to see that one of the poorest countries can make an effort towards developing its native culture. My lecture, given in German at the Cosmos Theater, was well attended; I was later informed that this auditorium, until recently requisitioned as a theater for G.I.'s, was looked at askance by the Viennese, and that I had attracted the "wrong kind" of audience.

I shall deal only briefly with Paris and London, where the art scene is comparatively familiar. As I had known the older artists for many years, I concentrated on the newest generation in France. It did not take long to convince me that the "Paris-is-finished" propaganda line had little foundation in fact. Pierre Loeb, whose gallery was the first on my itinerary, gave it as his opinion that Paris was about to make a new surge forward and that this evolution would be implemented by *foreigners*. His present group is oriented towards that theory; it comprises Zao-Wou-Ki (Chinese), da Silva (Portuguese) and Riopelle (Canadian). There were foreigners, too, in many other galleries: Hartung (German), Schneider (Swiss), Jacobson and Mortensen (Danish), Carrey (Belgian) and Lardera (Italian). There are furthermore scores of promising

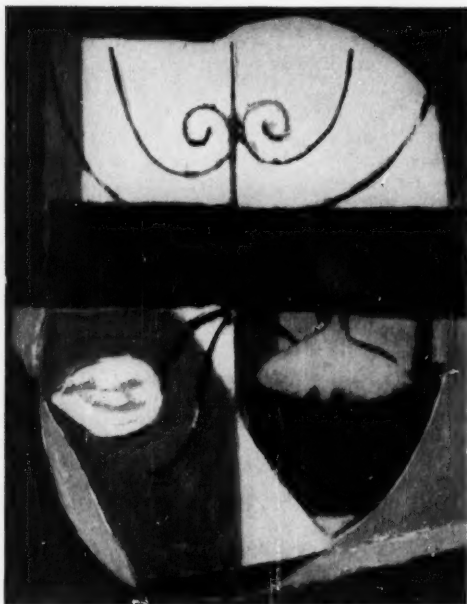
Bedri Rami (Eyüboğlu;  
Istanbul),  
Turkish Café,  
1950, oil



French artists as well; I visited some dozen galleries, and few could be classed as dull. It seemed to me more apparent than ever that it is abstraction that is producing the most authentic painting and sculpture of the twentieth century—and of this there is every variety. Paris has even developed a squirt-and-blob school of its own, which is quite contemptuous of its New York counterpart, as the French feel that they squirt and blob with greater taste and control.

Through a departmental error, my Paris lecture was scheduled for a Thursday evening, whereas my first London appearance was to take place Friday at noon. The transition was rapid and abrupt; it delivered me, in the nick of time, at the Central Art School—founded by Burne-Jones and very little altered since. I had often heard of the well-known British chill, but I had never anticipated anything so palpable as that which exuded from the Central Art School audience. For the record, I might add that here and at my second lecture at the Slade, I had the smallest and least enthusiastic attendance of my trip. The British, who once formed a highly discriminating art public, seem to have lost their enthusiasm; I was told that nowadays they are only interested in sports. Anyway, to my thinking, English art, except for Ben Nicholson and his small circle at St. Ives, is a bust. In Venice, I was amused to talk with Henry Moore and listen to his denunciations of the new "openwork" sculptors. Moore insisted that they were all wrong, because sculpture should assert itself in *any* surroundings, whereas openwork sculpture depended on what it was shown *against*. I didn't agree entirely with his thesis, but I certainly back up his judgment of this movement's exponents.

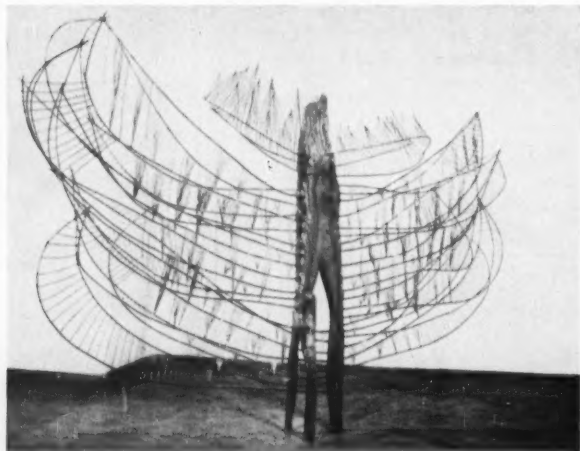
The most interesting exhibition in London I found to be that of Barbara Hepworth, who remains essentially monolithic; the worst, a "youth display" at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (if one excepts, of course, the side-splitting con-



Ferruh Basaga (Istanbul), *Still-Life*, 1950, oil, Resim ve Heykel Müzesinde, Istanbul

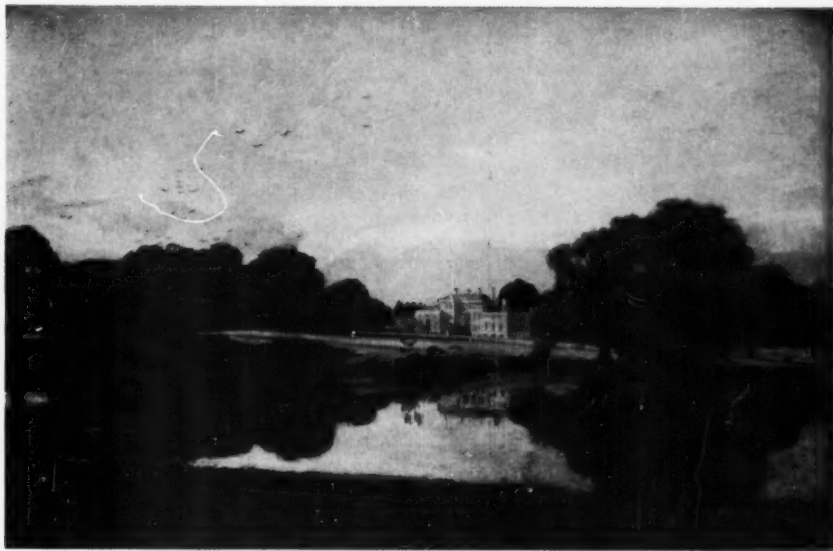
porary English collections at the Tate Gallery). I visited two young artists whom I did find promising—Pasmore and Turnbull.

Having started this journal with a tribute to the USIS, I should like to close with one to the British Council. It is indeed a revelation to see what an official organization can accomplish when intelligently directed. I had long been familiar with its services in behalf of English contemporary culture abroad; in London I saw the actual purchases during the last years, which must have required great diplomacy as well as courage. This is certainly an example that all governments would do well to follow.



Rudolf Haffner (Vienna), *Big Tree*, wood and bast





## THE BIRTH OF MODERN PAINTING AS EXEMPLIFIED IN LANDSCAPE

*W. G. Constable*

THE period from 1775 to 1825 saw developments in the arts comparable in character and importance to those that took place in *quattrocento* Italy. It was a time of vast political, social and economic changes in the Western world. The French Revolution ran its course; Napoleon rose and fell; the United States came into being, followed by the republics of South America. At the same time, the application of science to practical affairs developed on an unprecedented scale. Coal and iron were kings, and the Industrial Revolution entered on its last phase.

Out of these political and economic events vast social changes developed. An hereditary aristocracy based on court favor or the possession of land began to be displaced by commercial and industrial magnates, and urban population outweighed rural. Thus the whole basis of patronage in the arts began to change, together with the attitude and demand of the public; while at the same time the conception of the arts as primarily a means of expression for the individual artist gained increasing acceptance.

One far-reaching consequence of these changes was a decline in the importance of subject matter, with which was closely linked the rise of

landscape painting as a major form of painters' activity. To speak of a decline in the importance of subject may seem paradoxical, in view of the anecdotal and sentimental work that filled the walls of the official academies of the time. But, in fact, such work was mainly a survival. New knowledge and new ideas, both of artist and patron, bred a new attitude that foreshadowed and made possible the great triumphs of nineteenth-century art. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the various types of painting were ranked in a hierarchy, headed by history painting, with landscape and still-life painting relegated to the lowest ranks. In the course of the fifty years here under consideration, landscape painting came to be used and accepted as a major means of expression for the artist. The turn of still-life painting was not to come until later, despite the noble example set by Chardin; but it followed the same course as landscape, until with Cézanne it came to rival landscape in importance. Thus, knowledge of the meaning and significance of subject ceased to be important. The new type

Above: John Constable, *Malvern Hall, 1809 (?)*, oil, 20 1/4 x 30", National Gallery, London

of patron, the new type of spectator, needed only the ordinary experience of everyday life to understand the subject of a work of art, and the painter was free to concentrate on the use of form and color. So the path was cleared for the non-representational art of our own day.

Consider now how this change took place. Great landscape painters had, of course, worked in the seventeenth century, especially in Rome and Holland. But the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries took hold of the noble traditions then established and developed it in their own way. The main center of that development lay in England, where two main lines of change may be seen. One of these was the growth of topographical landscape—the portraiture of places. The first great school of topography had been that of seventeenth-century Holland, with painters such as van der Heyden as outstanding figures. Dutch painting was admired and eagerly bought in eighteenth-century England—not by the landed gentry, but mainly by the rising class of great merchants. In the eighteenth century, the influence of Holland was joined by that of Venice. Canaletto, Bellotto, Guardi and the hosts of their imitators found a ready market in England, and Canaletto himself spent nine years working in England, with an interval of only a few months. The voracity of English buyers of the period became proverbial, and the extent to which topographical landscapes were bought may be judged from a few examples. The fourth Earl of Carlisle acquired twenty-four views by Canaletto

and his followers; the Duke of Buckingham bought twenty-one examples; twenty-three Venetian views, mainly by Canaletto and Guardi, and eight of Naples and Sicily were bought by the Duke of Buccleuch; and twenty-four views of Venice were painted by Canaletto for the fourth Duke of Bedford. Perhaps the most remarkable of all, fifty-one paintings of Canaletto were purchased by George III from Joseph Smith, British Consul at Venice, together with some two hundred drawings. In addition to these, many smaller groups of paintings can be traced back to eighteenth-century English purchases in Italy.

It is not surprising, therefore, that with such a market in view a native school of topography should develop. It produced no remarkable masterpieces and was chiefly an affair of tinted drawings, made for reproduction by print-sellers. But its significance in changing the way in which men regarded landscape was immense. The earlier theory of an ideal beauty, with landscape adjusted to conform to the "idea of perfect nature" (to use Dufresnoy's phrase in his *De arte graphica*), was being displaced in favor of landscape as a factual record. In other words, subjects and treatment that involved education and knowledge on the part of the spectator were being supplanted by those made familiar by everyday acquaintance; and so the importance of subject declined.

At the same time, the enthusiasm for Claude Lorrain, Salvator Rosa and Gaspar Poussin, with its roots in the concept of ideal beauty, met with growing criticism. In the forefront of

Richard Wilson, Hounslow Heath, 1765-70, oil, 16 1/2 x 20 3/4", National Gallery, London







J.M.W. Turner, *The Slave Ship*, 1840, oil, 36 x 48", Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

such critics had been Hogarth, who not only scathingly attacked the connoisseurs of the day but put forward a rival theory to the current concept of an ideal beauty. In his *Analysis of Beauty*, published in 1753, he developed a remarkable principle of purely formal beauty which would have a direct appeal to the sensibilities and emotions of the spectator, without the need for symbolism or literary allusion.

Concurrently, another force was at work to weaken the hold on men's minds of the concept of ideal beauty. In 1704 Isaac Newton had published his *Opticks; Or, a Treatise of the Reflections, Refractions, Inflections and Colours of Light*. As revolutionary as the same author's famous *Principia*, this book, unlike that work, was written in English, and both in subject and in treatment was more easily comprehensible by laymen. Almost at once it attracted attention outside scientific circles; and after Newton's death, which awoke new interest in his achievement, the English poets seized upon his ideas, and even upon his very phraseology, to express a new way of looking at nature, in which light and color played an increasingly important part.

This is not the place to develop a thesis that has been admirably treated in Miss Marjorie Hope Nicholson's *Newton Demands the Muse* (Princeton, 1946). Here it is enough to point out that color and light are major themes in the poetry of Thomson, Young and Akenside, and especially in Thomson, who in his *Spring* even describes a rainbow in terms of the spectrum and links the name of Newton with his description:

*Meantime, refracted from yon eastern cloud  
Bestriding earth, the grand ethereal bow  
Shoots up immense, and ev'ry hue unfolds  
In fair proportion running from the red,  
To where the violet fades into the sky.  
Here, awful Newton, the dissolving clouds  
Form, fronting on the sun, thy show'ry prism;  
And, to the sage instructed eye, unfold  
The various twine of light, by thee disclos'd  
From the white mingling mase.*

(Thomson, *The Seasons: Spring*, 11. 203-12)

And in *To the Memory of Newton* he describes the spectrum as follows (11. 102-11):

*First the flaming red  
Sprung vivid forth; the tawny orange next;  
And next delicious yellow; by whose side  
Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing green.  
Then the pure blue, that swells autumnal skies,  
Ethereal played; and then, of sadder hue,  
Emerged the deepened indigo, as when  
The heavy-skirted evening droops with frost;  
While the last gleamings of refracted light  
Died in the fainting violet away.*

These poets were not only extensively read in England but were a frequent source of appropriate quotations applied to their works by painters, and used on engravings after those works.

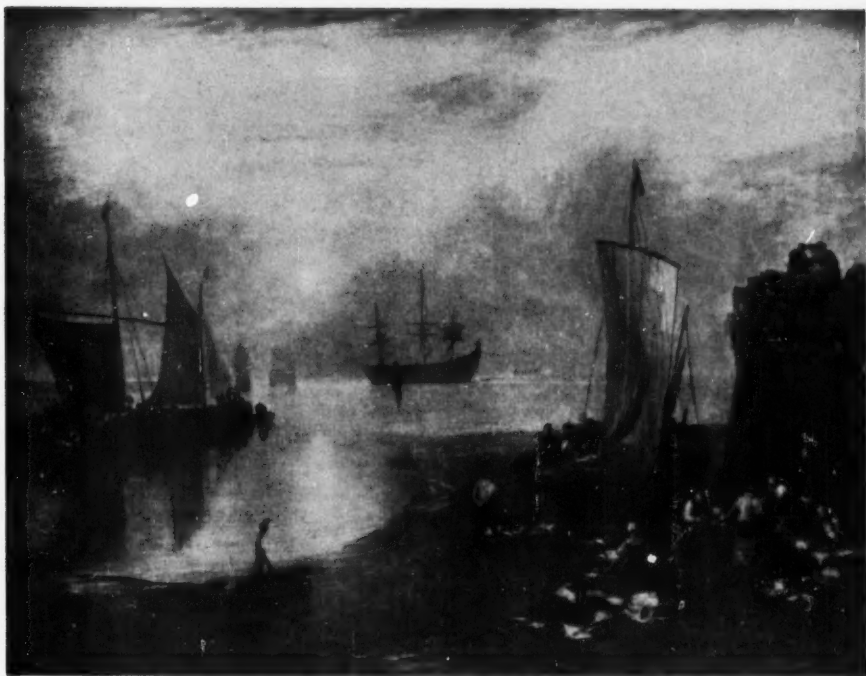
To find specific references to Newton among artists or writers upon art is difficult; but Newtonian ideas concerning the nature of light and its relation to color were in the air and must have had their impact upon the minds of painters



Richard Wilson, *Rome and the Vatican from the Janiculum*, 1753, oil, 38 x 52", collection Earl of Dartmouth, photo A. C. Cooper

Richard Wilson, *Destruction of the Children of Niobe*, c. 1765, oil, 49 x 69", Museum of Fine Arts, Boston





J.M.W. Turner, *Sun Rising Through Vapor*, 1807, oil, 52 x 70", National Gallery, London

J.M.W. Turner, *Junction of the Thames and Medway*, c. 1805-10, 43¼ x 56½", National Gallery of Art, Washington





John Constable, *Cloud Study*, c. 1822, oil, 11 1/2 x 19", private collection, courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

—and especially painters of landscape. The situation is exactly comparable to that in the nineteenth century, when Helmholtz's theories concerning light were part of the climate of opinion and served to influence the impressionists.

Thus, with practice, theory and scientific knowledge all striking at the roots of earlier conceptions and methods in landscape painting, changes were inevitable. In these changes, three painters are outstanding: Richard Wilson, Joseph Mallord William Turner and John Constable. Neither in temperament nor in intention were they revolutionary. All three admired and consciously learned from earlier masters; and it is interesting that Claude, the great exemplar of ideal landscape, should have been a particular object of veneration for all three painters.

Of the three, the earliest and the most traditional in outlook and method was Richard Wilson (1713-1782; his birth date is usually given incorrectly as 1714). Wilson is little known outside England, and there his reputation has varied considerably. Neglected during his later lifetime, in the earlier nineteenth century his merits were widely recognized, especially among artists. Then followed a period of comparative obscurity, until today he is regarded as an important painter, both for his achievement and for his influence. Trained originally as a portrait painter, he went in 1750 to Italy, staying in Venice for a year and in Rome for six or seven years. There he turned to landscape painting, at first influenced by contemporary Venetians, notably Marco Ricci and Zuccarelli, later and more powerfully by the Roman School, and especially by Claude. His earlier work reveals in its design the use of silhouetted forms set in planes parallel to the picture plane, and in such details as the treatment of the foliage, a deep debt

to Claude. To such essays in the pastoral, Wilson added paintings in the heroic mode, producing a series of paintings of which *Salvator Rosa* was the chief inspiration.

Back in England, however, the *genius loci* began to affect him. The influence of Venice reasserted itself; he turned to topography and found in the Dutch masters an incentive to study light and air. Henceforward, his landscapes became more intimate, more specifically an expression of the sentiments inspired by the particular scene before him. In detail, he still retains earlier conventions; in design, he is still apt to follow Venetian or Roman patterns; but in his suffusion of the whole landscape with light and air, and in his increasing reliance upon the direct effect of his painting upon the spectator, without the aid of symbol or of association, he lays the foundations of modern landscape painting.

Both Turner and Constable not only admired Wilson but learned from him. Turner, trained as a topographical draftsman in watercolor, brought to his earlier work in oil the same feeling that Wilson had for the specific character of places, and in some of his first oil paintings definitely modeled his work on that of Wilson. Then he passes to challenging the Dutch and Claude, always striving to surpass them in suffusion of his painting with light and air. Finally, he breaks away from the limited color range of his predecessors and the limits set by earlier concepts of design, to make light and air the main theme of his work. His palette approaches the spectral palette of the impressionists; he paints in a high key, with shadows full of reflected light; he exploits the possibilities of a broken touch and the use of sharp impasto. Towards the end of his life, form has significance only in so far as it reflects



light; and in his last paintings, the whole purpose and practice of impressionism is embodied.

Constable was more explicit in his admiration of Wilson than was Turner, and repeatedly in his letters he pays tribute to him, emphasizing Wilson's treatment of light. Constable, too, more consciously than Turner, paid homage to Ruysdael and Claude by copying them. Yet in his work specific examples of older masters' influence is harder to find than in that of Turner. Occasionally, however, such references are to be found in some early paintings that recall Wilson in their semi-topographic approach, their quiet intimacy and subdued color, and their feeling for light and air.

Constable was, however, less skilful as a painter than Turner. He could not easily borrow or adapt other men's methods, and he had toilsomely to work out for himself the means to achieve his ends. These, as with Turner, were the expression of light in all its phases and mutations. A famous remark of his sums up his approach to painting: "Let the form of an object be what it may, light, shade and perspective will always make it beautiful"—perspective here referring to the effect of atmosphere in suggesting space. Equally revealing is the importance that he attached to the sky in landscape, of which he said, "It is the source of light in nature and governs everything." This remark was more than a platitude; it was the expression of a conviction made manifest in terms of a large number of cloud studies, on which were noted the date, time of day, compass direction and wind conditions. These cloud studies are also further evidence of the influence of scientific research on landscape

painting. It is now known, through the researches of Dr. Kurt Badt, that Constable studied carefully and critically contemporary explanations of atmospheric phenomena, notably Forster's *Researches about Atmospheric Phenomena* (1812) and Howard's *Theory of the Origin and Modification of Clouds*. Here, then, is something that parallels in its effects the researches of Newton's *Opticks* in the past and those of Helmholtz in the future.

Constable's insistence upon the importance of light led to revolutionary developments in his technique. In his later work, shadows become equally important with the lights, and are equally put in terms of positive color. To attain luminosity, Constable breaks his touch, juxtaposing strokes of differing hues to be united by the eye, and exploits all the resources of varying texture in paint.

It was by his passion for light, and the means he used to express it, that Constable helped to break the spell of neo-classic convention in France, and by his influence on Delacroix, Corot and the Barbizon painters, he helped to pave the way to impressionist triumphs. In 1824, three paintings by him were exhibited at the Salon, and another at Lille in the following year; while at least twenty other examples of his work went to France through dealers. This is not the place to enlarge upon this episode; but contemporary evidence of the excitement, interest and (be it added) criticism among older painters that Constable's work aroused, is certainly too strong to be disregarded.

A new era in landscape painting had arrived; and a torch kindled in the eighteenth century had been handed on to the nineteenth.

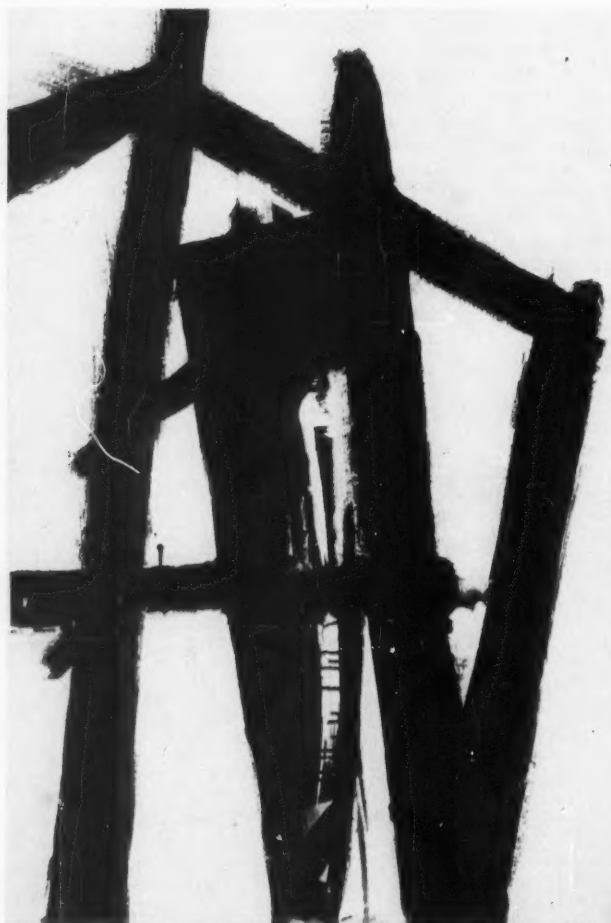
John Constable, *Stoke by Nayland*, c. 1836, oil, 49 x 66", Art Institute, Chicago



FRANZ KLINE was born in 1911 in Lehighton, Pennsylvania, in the Indian hills country, and grew up in that region of intense industrial activity. He was schooled in Philadelphia at Girard College, in Boston at Boston University, and in London at Heatherly's School. Kline's work is in public and private collections and has been seen in country-wide exhibitions. He has had several one-man shows at the Egan Gallery.

Much has been said of parallels between contemporary abstraction and Oriental esthetic, and Kline's bold strokes are among those having the nearest affinity to Eastern calligraphy. The large scale of his work, both in actual dimension and spatial suggestion, the heavy surfaces of his thick black lines and their muscular vigor are, however, decidedly Western in feeling.

## FRANZ KLINE



Painting, oil, 36 x 24", 1952

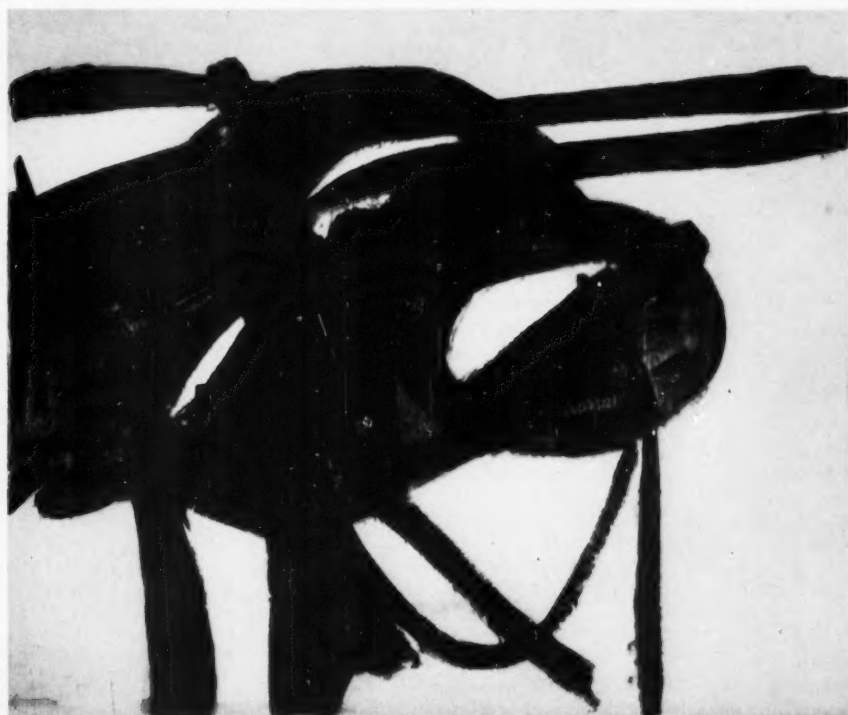
All photos courtesy Egan Gallery





Painting, oil, 60 x 80", 1951

Chief, oil, 60 x 80", 1950, Museum of Modern Art





## NATURALISM AND STYLIZATION IN YORUBA ART

*Justine M. Cordwell*

ARCHEOLOGISTS working in West Africa are faced with the problem of reconstructing the development of cultures whose foci seems to have been in religious, philosophical and esthetic concepts, rather than in technology and material culture. This pattern is found in contemporary West African societies, and may well be the reason that today there is so little archeological evidence of the large, complex kingdoms that flourished centuries ago along the West Coast, according both to the accounts of early European explorers and traders and to the traditional unwritten histories of present-day African societies.

With so little concrete evidence, it is small wonder that the discovery in 1938 of bronze, life-size, naturalistic portraits found in Ife, in the Western Provinces of Southern Nigeria, aroused so much comment and speculation among social scientists and art historians alike. An earlier discovery of such a bronze head had been made in

1910 by Frobenius, the German ethnographer, but some doubt was cast upon the authenticity of its West African origin. The discovery of eleven such heads in 1938 at Ife brought the problem of their origin to the fore again. In 1939, Bascom published a description of these heads, which brought the beauty and technical excellence of the work of the unknown African artisans to the attention of the Western world. Yet the principal question still remains with us, of how such examples of naturalistic representation and technical skill in *cire perdue* bronze casting could appear in a society so little concerned, apparently, with technology or material invention—a society, moreover, whose present-day artists seem more inclined to stylization than to naturalistic representation.

Above: Heads from Ife: left, bronze, half life-size; right, bronze, 12 1/2" high; both formerly collection William R. Bascom, now in Museum, Ife, courtesy Art Institute of Chicago. Opposite: two views of half-figure of an Oni of Ife, bronze, 14 1/2" high.

The bronze heads are both half life-size and life-size. They have striated facial markings; in the life-size heads, a series of very small holes outlines areas about the mouth and hair line. Some have evidences of paint in the region of the eye to indicate white, iris and a red rim. In the nostril of the large head brought to the United States by Bascom, and now in the museum at Ife, was a small glass bead. The necks of almost all the heads have stylized creases in rings, and holes on the side varying in diameter from three-sixteenths to a quarter of an inch. The top of the head is missing in all instances; however, in the half life-size heads, which have diadems modeled on them, the hole is complete above the diadem line, whereas in the larger heads without diadems the opening is only in the upper part of the crown. The diadem, likewise of bronze, is similar to that worn by the present Oni of Ife at ceremonies of great moment. Many of the heads discovered in 1938 during the digging of a trench for the foundations of a new house had been previously dented by some blunt instrument. Other bronzes, which the Oni of Ife had revealed earlier in his palace, comprised a torso figure with head and diadem, similar to one in terra cotta found by



*Oni of Ife in bead crown and beaded diadem*  
(from Talbot, *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*, London, 1926)



Frobenius, and a mask of almost pure copper, said to be a portrait of Obalufon, an early Oni of Ife. A number of these works were reproduced in *MAGAZINE OF ART* for April, 1950, to illustrate William Fagg's article on "The Antiquities of Ife."

Speculation concerning the origin of the heads ranges over many extremes. Several theories, for example proposing a Greek or Etruscan origin, or the introduction of an itinerant Mediterranean craftsman into the West Coast culture, must have been current after Frobenius' discovery of the "Olokun" head, for Talbot in *The Peoples of Southern Nigeria* (1926) found it necessary to point out that this particular bronze head, as well as the terra-cotta heads then in existence, were simply very realistic portraits of physical types existing in present-day Ife and its general area. As Talbot's work was ethnographic, however, it did not seem to reach art historians or those who were most urgent in pressing the claims of Mediterranean or even Egyptian origin, for such speculation has been published as late as 1949 by Leon Underwood in his *Bronzes of West Africa*.

The accumulated evidence of archeologists and ethnologists, particularly since the second World War, has laid to rest many of the more far-fetched theories. Investigations conducted by the government archeologist of Nigeria and French archeologists of the Institut Français de l'Afrique Noire at Dakar (IFAN) have uncovered evidence in Nigeria and the French Sudan that reinforces the theory of the purely West African origin of the heads. Working from the traditions of present-day societies in the area, as well as from archeological evidence, these were the clues available to the investigators:

1. The stories of the present-day brass workers of Benin City and the court historians of the Oba of Benin concur on the point that the Oba of Benin in approximately the thirteenth century requested the Oni of Ife to send him a craftsman who could teach the Bini how to execute bronze work, which previously had had to be ordered from the Yoruba center at Ife.

2. The French archeologists, such as Mauny of IFAN at Dakar, have uncovered ancient mines and smelting of copper in the Sudan directly north of Nigeria, on what appears to be an ancient caravan route to the Mediterranean. These finds corroborate Talbot's earlier suggestion that the mines in Nigeria yielding tin, zinc and copper are of very great age.

3. Terra-cotta human portraits in a naturalistic style have been found by Bernard Fagg in the area of Jos, at a geological level which places the date of their deposit at least one thousand years ago. It is at once apparent that their modeling is of a very high degree of realism.

From these facts certain conclusions can be drawn. The bronze heads are indigenous to



Stylized ibeji or twin figures from Oyo, photographed by the author

southern Nigeria and the Yoruba country, though the technique of lost-wax casting was probably learned from a more northerly people living either in the Sudan or the Mediterranean littoral. The form, however, in which they were made, their style and the function which they served seems to stem from an indigenous traditional expression in terra-cotta, which would be fairly simple to translate into wax modeling. Bronze, owing to its relative scarcity, seems to have been reserved for the use of the rulers, and since the heads vary greatly in features, the earlier suggestion of Bascom that these are most probably portraits, perhaps of the Onis themselves, or certainly of members of the ruling families, seems eminently reasonable.

The actual function for which the heads were intended, as well as the reason for their very naturalistic style, are still matters of speculation. The contradiction between the early Yoruba naturalism in this one aspect of art and the present-day Yoruba stylization still remains to be considered.

During a period of field work done in Yoruba country under a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship, the author, while working with creative specialists in graphic and plastic arts, encountered constant references by carvers to forms

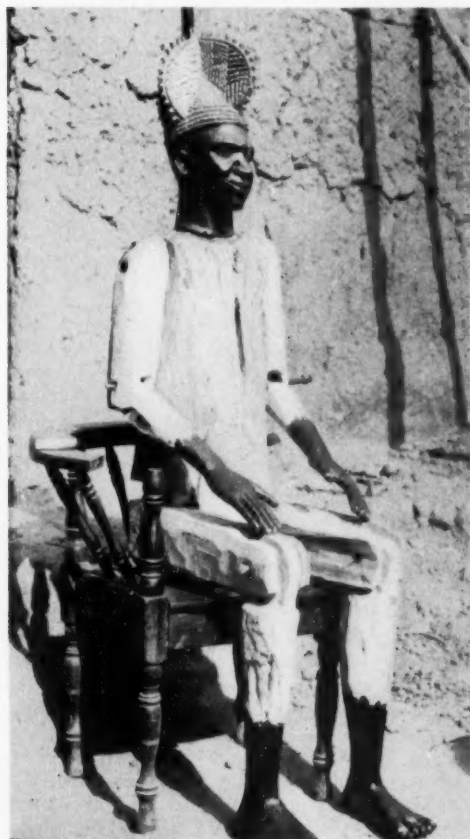
said to be copied directly from life, with particular emphasis upon a funerary figure supposedly representing a dead member of the family. This reference did not have immediate significance; but as the field work continued, and the intent and visual conceptions of the Yoruba carvers became more apparent, the problem of naturalism and stylization in Yoruba art began to unfold.

The carver, traditionally working in genre subject matter, approaches his design with a naturalistic conception in mind, but during his training period he has learned sets of symbols, to which he adds in varying degrees by reason of his own creativity. It is through the symbols, which we see as stylized forms, that he represents his subject matter. The symbols are manipulated into a composition that for the Yoruba artist shows the relationship between various parts of the natural form that he is trying to represent. It is not always necessary, therefore, that he have his subject before him, since he can draw on the various sym-

bols he has learned and invented, and these follow regional styles closely enough to be recognized and accepted by other members of his society. Hence stylization may not be as rigid as might be supposed, and the artist is free to work in his own way within the culturally approved framework. Accordingly when a carver says that he is making a form—which to us appears to be stylized—look exactly like its subject, he may mean that he is showing the relationship of its parts as he sees them, even though he may be taking artistic liberties inherent in the creative process in order to produce a pleasing composition. For other forms, however, such as the funeral figures or certain masks, the carver may be called upon to attempt a direct copy of nature, and it may be imperative that the proportions and representation be as close to life as possible.

The funeral figure itself is a life-size puppet used in the second funeral or definitive burial to represent a member of a family who may have

*Akó puppet, wood, from Owo; left: on completion by carver; right: partially dressed for parade through village; photographs by the author*





been buried anywhere from three months to three years previously. This ceremony, the *akó*, may be performed for the ruler, a chief, the head of a family or, in some areas, for a mother or a grandmother as well, if the family can afford it. The *akó* ceremony is a reflection of the importance in Yoruba culture of the ancestral cult, which takes various forms in different sub-ethnic groups. This extremely complex and class-conscious society emphasizes status and prestige, so that an ancestor is believed to continue to play the same role in the next world that he has had in this one. His family, however, in their attempt to make the spirit happy, do everything in their power to try to raise this status of their forebear in the after-world as well. Thus, since the ancestor protects and watches over the material and spiritual welfare of his family and acts as an intermediary between the living and the gods, it is important to arrange the most lavish funeral possible, in order to assure the continued benevolence of the dead. The family may save for years after the burial of the corpse, in order to amass the amount necessary to give an elaborate funeral, lasting from three to nine days. For this occasion, they make every effort to have the best-known carver in the area make a wooden puppet representing the dead. This figure, richly dressed, is carried on a stool or chair on the shoulders of the male members of the family through his village. Since the visit of the dead to the living has been kept a secret until the last minute, the townspeople are caught by surprise when they see a figure that so closely resembles the one who has died.

The presence today of this naturalistic art form having this particular function may possibly provide the explanation that we have been seeking for the naturalism of the Ife bronze heads—an explanation that would be in line with Bascom's suggestion of their commemorative nature.

Let us re-examine the heads in the light of this explanation, beginning with the most naturalistic large heads and setting up an hypothetical development of style. We may first reassess the clues we have in hand. The paint on the heads would seem to permit the inference that they were probably tinted to represent natural skin tones; this would lead to the conclusion that bronze as a material was important not so much for its artistic patina as for its lasting qualities and rareness—the latter feature explaining its exclusive use by the ruling class. The crown of the head seems to have been left open, not only because this made it simpler to cast, but also because a real crown of beads could be fastened to the heads by means of the small holes about the hair line, thus making unnecessary a completed head form. The holes across the face of some of the larger heads are still unexplained, but although some students maintain that they could have held hair, mustaches are alien to the indigenous culture, though some small chin beards are still cultivated by

elder males in Yoruba society. The holes in the necks of the bronzes were most probably for the nails which held the head onto a wooden puppet.

Within the scope of this article we cannot analyze the development of the type of representations of the dead Ife rulers, but a possible order of style is suggested here. The funeral figures appear to be part of a pattern which covers a geographical area from Lake Chad to Dakar and all of the area south of this imaginary line to the coast of West Africa. Small heads of terra cotta and stone, some crude, some technically excellent, some stylized and some naturalistic have been found in archeological sites scattered through this area, and Mauny suggests that the bronze figures and heads of Benin and Ife are part of this pattern. If we accept this hypothesis, it is probable that the small terra-cotta heads found by Frobenius, and later by Bernard Fagg, in Ife, and the small terra-cotta figurine resembling the small bronze figure of the Oni, are the earliest portrait forms of the dead rulers of Ife. The bronze figurine then would seem to have been made following the terra-cotta models. The half life-size heads in bronze follow the same modeling of the head on the bronze figurine, but are of a larger size than the half-figure, and seem to have been made to fit on a wooden form, for like the larger heads, these half-life-size heads have holes in the sides of the neck. The life-size heads appear to have been developed to give even greater realism to the portraiture already rendered naturalistic in the medium of bronze, for the modeled diadem disappears and is replaced by a rounded, yet open, crown of the head, with holes about the edge of the hairline by which an actual diadem and crown of beads could be attached, and the completed figure with its wooden body could be dressed in the robes of the Oni. The hypothetical development in style from the small figure with the costume appearing modeled on a bronze head and body to the life-size head on a wooden body, which could be dressed in actual Yoruba clothes and costume, is given a note of authenticity by the evidence of the life-size, naturalistic portrait mask in copper—supposedly that of Obalufon—which could be worn on the head of a living man, who could then be carried through the streets, bowing and waving, thus carrying to the ultimate the illusion of the return of the dead ruler.

One problem remains: How were these forms displayed after the funeral ceremony? The evidence of the denting of the heads seems to indicate that the heads were all displayed together in one place, perhaps in a shrine. The Benin people, who learned to work bronze from the Ife people and who were early influenced by their design, make complete small figures of their dead rulers in bronze, which stand on a special altar for each dead *oba*. If the Ife people displayed the wooden figure with its bronze head in a mud shrine, white ants would eventually ruin the body

and the clothing unless these parts were renewed. On the other hand, the figure may have been buried, the bronze portions being later exhumed and placed in a shrine. The customs of the eastern Yoruba might bear this out, for there a dead ruler is buried in the reception compound of the palace in a raised mud bench, on top of which is placed a broad board of *iroko* wood, his bones later being placed in the shrine of the sacred grove of the town. The same treatment of the puppet might account for the complete removal of the paint that originally was on the bronzes, and also explain why the Obalufon mask and the Olokun head of

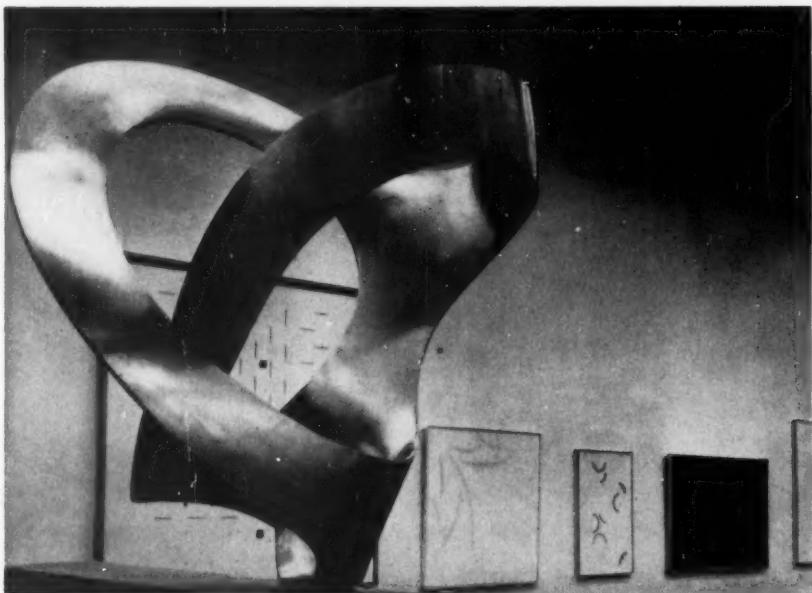
Frobenius were blackened with oil and blood sacrifices, and without a trace of paint.

Whatever the case, the heads seem to have been buried for safekeeping after the vandalism done to them. One unexplained clue is the presence of the very small glass trade-bead found in the nostril of the large head brought to the United States by Bascom. Beads of this type were not introduced into Africa until the last century, according to Yoruba informants, so that one must entertain the hypothesis that the decoration of the heads was renewed up to the time of burial, probably sometime during the past one hundred years.

*Funerary figure and altar of Oba of Benin, father of Oba Ovanramwe (d. 1914), cast from wax modeled by the succeeding Oba, son of the deceased; photographed by the author*



## MAX BILL *by Ernesto Rogers*



ANYONE who wishes to study the work of Max Bill would be well advised to visit his little villa in Zurich. For here the human qualities of his art, as well as its esthetic and intellectual values, become apparent.

Few artists' residences so clearly express the integration of ideals that are not only thought out, but applied to everyday life. Built on a steep site near the city limits, the house overlooks the wide river valley, sharing the advantages of both town and country. Within this cube-shaped building Max and his wife Binia share the earthly paradise of art—he as painter, sculptor, architect and writer, and she as an outstanding photographer. The second-floor alcove opens onto the studio below, creating a continuous flow of space and partaking of the same breath of life.

How often must Binia have looked down from the top floor at her husband, still laboring in the small hours of the night! There comes to mind Vasari's story of Paolo Uccello's wife, who—less tactful than Binia—would attempt to call the artist away from his work, while he, imperturbable and absorbed, would merely exclaim, "How beautiful is this perspective!"

Setting aside any question of value, of course, it is not only this passing reference that makes me associate Max Bill with the humanist Uccello. They share the same desire to have their art control reality in a rational way.

Art is interpreted by the Bills not only as

an aim, but as a way of life, harmonizing thought and action and serving as a spiritual transmission-belt between the individual and society. When life and art are conceived as one in this fashion, as a natural consequence the unity between the various arts is likewise taken for granted. No longer can a hierarchy exist among the noble or "fine" arts, and the minor arts or crafts. If every moment of life can and does participate in the world of art, then every object should be created as a worthy contribution to it.

This, to my mind, is the very essence of the discipline that the Bauhaus not only taught to its own students but also passed on as a basic principle to all the artists of our generation. Few have assimilated the Bauhaus doctrines more consistently or translated them more personally than Max Bill, throughout his brilliant career as painter, sculptor, writer, architect and designer.

The principles of the Bauhaus, which arose from empirical considerations and were carried out in technical fields, parallel (though perhaps for opposite reasons) certain achievements of modern philosophy—notably those of the late Benedetto Croce. Within the field of pure esthetics, his theories abolished the traditional scale of values that for so long had been based on the various "kinds" of works of art; the creative act, individualized and isolated, became the supreme manifestation of the spirit, ennobling and equalizing the works it determined.

Art as life, and art as creation; where these two lines of thought intersect, we find Max Bill's position. Like other highly sensitive artists of his generation, he resolves within his work two opposite systems—one oriented towards the practical, the other towards the speculative. In all his works, we sense the translation of an abstract idea into concrete terms; we see the formal solution, through the medium of a selected material, of a personal poetic inspiration.

While Max Bill's production must be considered against the cultural background of our time, and in the light of his Bauhaus training, this still does not serve to account for his *precision*. This, as I see it, is a Swiss national trait. Like the celebrated timepieces of his country, every one of Bill's works seems to be mounted on pivots of rubies, so perfectly is the mechanism of concept geared to the structure, and so meticulous is the execution of each part.

Of course as a general rule it can be said that careful detail is in itself no guarantee of a work of art. Nor would this criterion be a suitable one to apply to Max Bill, were it not that in his case perfect execution is a proof of his taste and, at the same time, the concrete, tangible symbol of his particular, poetic world. *It is his poetry made object.*

In the light of this intention, it is not surprising that the backbone, and possibly also the ideological pattern of his work, is without exception provided by mathematics, geometrical theorems, the laws of optics or rational constructions of an objective nature. This is equally apparent in Bill's paintings, where the achievements of the new plastic vision are taken up, developed and tried out in daring experiments grafted onto expressionism and other modes that grapple with

the problems of contemporary art. His methods seem analogous to those of contrapuntal music, where a secondary theme is announced in a series of clear notes or chords, and successive variations are tightly interlocked and completely controlled by the composer's mind. We can often follow the thematic development of a single motive from one picture to the next, so that we are led on through an articulated "suite" to the ultimate playing out of one particular experiment.

I use the word "experiment" deliberately, for here is an artist so scrupulously rational that he identifies scientific investigations with esthetic ones. For him, research is creation. It is, of course, a temptation for the critic to try to follow out these two distinct aspects of Max Bill's painting separately, in order to envisage it more clearly. But let him take a look at this versatile artist's architecture, his furniture or other objects designed for use—chairs, lamps, brushes—and he will see that in such works, art and craftsmanship blend even more intimately in the urgent pursuit of perfection. The balance between usefulness and beauty leads to a synthesis, predetermined by the practical purpose for which each article is intended, while at the same time it takes its place esthetically in the current of art.

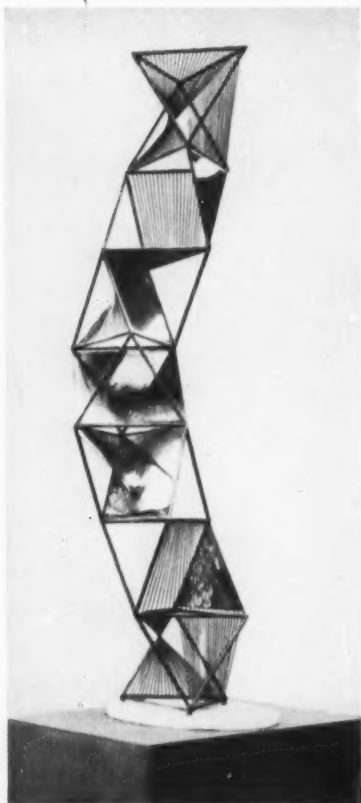
In *Eupalinos* Paul Valéry remarks, "In construction there is no such thing as detail." If we apply this idea of "construction" to Max Bill, we find him devoting as much attention to the design of a shaving brush as to any other object, seemingly more worthwhile.

"Architects, painters, sculptors, we must all return to craft," says the first Bauhaus manifesto. Today we all admit the deep moral significance of this injunction, for the word "craft" reinstates the merit of the idea of quality that is

Project for school of design now under construction at Ulm, Germany, 1950-52







Construction, 1939, brass, 64" high,  
courtesy Museu de arte moderna, São Paulo

inherent in all art.

The successful embodiment of spirit in matter proves that the artist has apprehended the full responsibility of his task. But this feeling cannot come to fruition unless the artist, fired by the highest ideals, uses his own hands to grasp concrete reality—perfecting techniques of execution, ascertaining and probing the laws that govern material things, searching out their physical characteristics in order to enhance them and wrest from them the utmost expressive power.

Max Bill's artistic activities, considered as a whole, are a practical confirmation of the humanist ideal. One should not discuss his activity as a sculptor apart from his total output, because the multiple but interdependent character of his production is so important. Although admittedly some of his sculptures may seem to represent the highest level of his artistic achievement, in view of the diversity, yet cohesiveness of his activities, I cannot agree with some other critics that he is essentially a sculptor. The integration of art with daily life, precision, craftsmanship, translation into object—these, to my mind, are Bill's principal virtues; nor can his sculptural works be consid-

ered in any other light. They are perhaps the most perfect demonstration of that poetic choice which controls all his work. Devoid of any utilitarian purpose, lacking any pretense at subject matter, they are nevertheless intended to function in a particular environment. They are not mere laboratory pieces, as to my mind is so often regrettably the case with many contemporary productions.

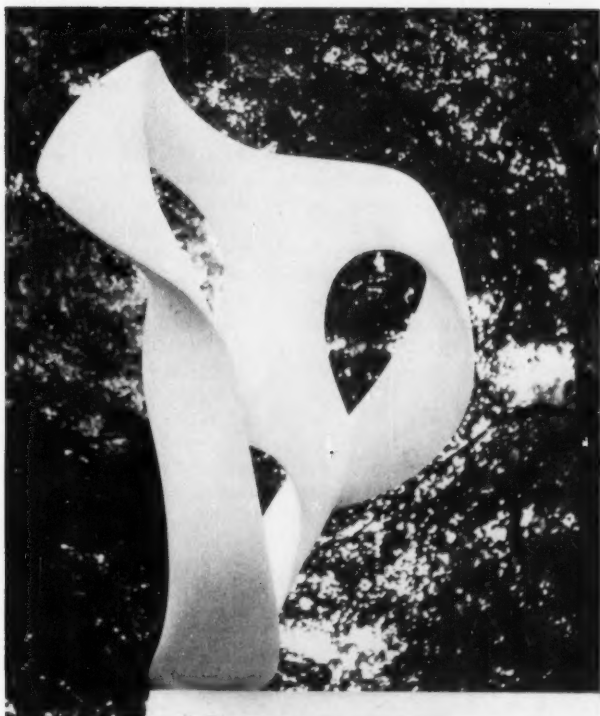
Whenever I see a work of art, I ask myself: "Where would I like to place it?" This, perhaps, is an architect's professional quirk; at any rate, in the presence of Max Bill's sculptures, I always have the answer. I know at once whether they would look better outdoors—which is more generally the case—or, less frequently, enclosed within an architectural space. The interplay between sculpture and nature, or between sculpture and architecture, is established in Bill's work in the classical manner—by the harmony of contrasts. His precisely defined forms find the foil for their physiognomy in the character of their setting. They are a kind of "knot in space," as he puts it, or as I would prefer to say, a "knot of space." The powerful energy accumulated within their mass exerts attractions and repulsions that operate upon their surroundings.

It still thrills me to recall the first time I saw Bill's monument *Continuity* (1947). Placed on a lawn along the shore of the Lake of Zurich, its great loops contrasted sharply with the landscape; the voids between its convex and concave surfaces, however, provided marvelous peepholes that framed the distant view in a constantly new way. When the spectator, impelled by its dynamic power, walked around the piece, he could discover infinite points of view, as in a spatial cinema or a space-time continuum.

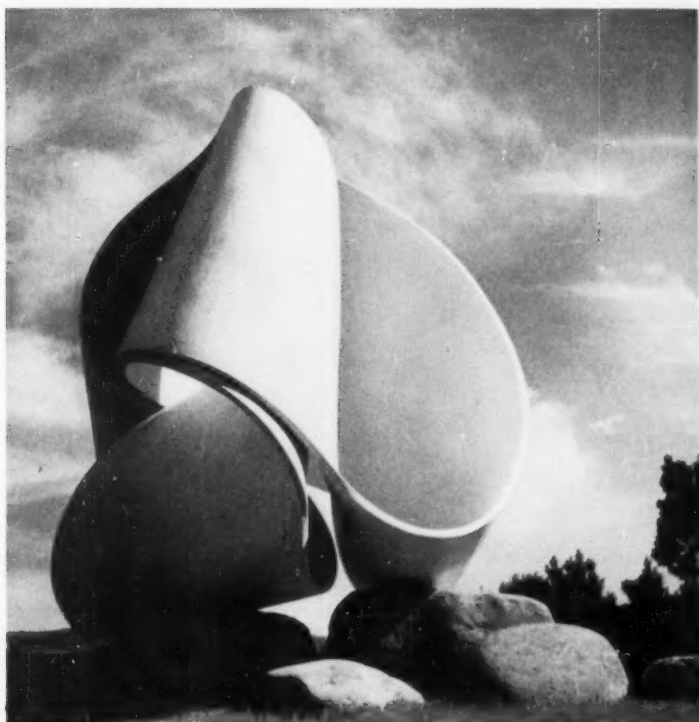
During the Festival of Britain in 1950, I visited Battersea Park, where sculpture has been installed in a masterly way within the lovely framework of an English park. Here I had a chance to compare Max Bill's work with that of other contemporary sculptors of the first rank and was able to observe how the various pieces functioned within the surrounding landscape. Some works, like Reg Butler's constructions, seemed to merge with nature as if they were fragments of it. Surprisingly, Henry Moore's two pieces there also seemed obedient to the laws that govern natural phenomena (although other examples of this artist's work appear more classical in inspiration). Not even Marino Marini's horse, though engaged in a desperate colloquy with nature, seemed quite distinct from it.

These and other modes of expression in the exhibition all seemed legitimate. I am not trying to evaluate or classify them, but only to state my own preferences. It seemed to me that only Maillol's female figure, in its compact interplay of ample masses, held its own on equal terms with nature. And Max Bill's *Rhythm in Space*, although





Rhythm in Space, 1947-48,  
reinforced plaster, 5' high,  
photograph Ernst Scheidegger



Continuity, 1947,  
reinforced plaster, 10' high,  
Exhibition Park, Zurich,  
photograph Hugo P. Herdeg

in a quite different idiom, aimed at the same ideal through its precise, objective, aristocratic forms.

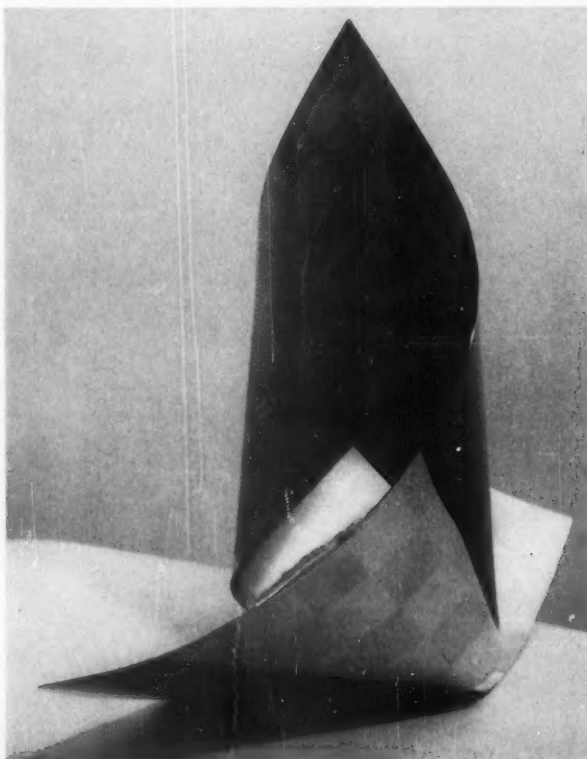
When Bill finds a river pebble, worn by time, what does he do? I imagine that he tries to capture its concealed directional lines and make them explicit and expressive. As evidence, there are the wonderful jewels that he contrives for Binia, in which the metal mounting of the stone acquires a poetic significance from its function.

Vantongerloo—Max Bill's artistic sire, as well as the artist who comes closest to him—would work with equal rigor though with less fantasy, creating spatial resonances around the enclosed form. Hans Arp would consider the object in a pathetic mood, seeking to discover that common ancestral origin where the mineral kingdom was still one with the vegetable and animal in the primal organism. Calder would suspend the stone and make it move, thus establishing its relation with surrounding space. And Brancusi would handle the stone as if it were the outcome of a lengthy

process of catharsis: the sublimation within the world of concrete art of a form that originated in nature—a fish, perhaps, or a bird. By contrast, Henry Moore or Barbara Hepworth would extract from the veins and contours of the stone mysterious, anthropomorphic images unseen by others. And this would be the way of Max Bill, and of certain others among the most vital contemporary artists, should their attention focus on a pebble.

By such an analysis (which in many instances could be corroborated by documents on the various artists mentioned) I have tried to find an approach which should make clear, through one simple example, the personal, distinctive esthetic of this creator of geometric jewels, this Pythagorean artist of Einstein's era, who knows that he can force his fantasy even to the exciting limits of the fourth dimension.

Max Bill has already produced a great deal and has well deserved his success. If he persists in his conscientious explorations, many a daring work still lies in store for us.



Hexagonal surface of  
two hundred and eighty squares, 1948-52,  
brass and nickel, 15 3/4" high,  
Museu de arte moderna, Rio de Janeiro,  
photograph Finsler

Virgil Thomson:

Eric Newton:

James Johnson Sweeney:

## A FORUM OF CRITICS

The First International Contemporary Music Festival was held at the Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh last November. As part of this Festival, which took place during the 1952 Pittsburgh International, a group of critics of music and art were asked to define the role of the contemporary critic, his qualifications and his responsibilities.

MAGAZINE OF ART, which has often—especially in its editorials—discussed the function and duties of the critic, is glad to reprint below, by courtesy of the Carnegie Institute, essential extracts from the Festival forum and especially to be able to present, side by side, the critic of art and the critic of music, so that their roles may be compared.

Virgil Thomson (*composer and music critic of the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE*):

Before saying what I think a critic's responsibilities or duties are, I think I will say a little bit about what I think they are not. I have never considered it my duty to promote or hinder any given artist's career, or to aid and abet any given institution. The trustees of course will always try to domesticate you to their issues, because by definition whatever they touch is *ipse facto* of civic value. But civic value belongs to the editorial page.

Neither is it your responsibility to defend any given school of composition against another nor to attack it unless you feel like it. You do not have to sit on the fence, and you do not have to get off the fence, and you certainly do not have to go along trying to raise musical standards—because musical standards are raised by the composition and the performance of music, not by essays on the subject; nor to spread enlightenment, which is the function of works of art, not of reviews. The enlightenment in Mozart is in Mozart; it is not in what I say about Mozart.

I think the business of the reviewer is a very simple one; it is to inform the reader about the subject he happens to be covering. That is his only legitimate reason for existing.

Now, being informative involves having some information. The critic's first duty therefore is to know what he is talking about; and this involves him, even before he answers any obligation whatsoever towards his readers, in an obligation towards the subject of his review. He has to know something to be able to size it up, to penetrate it, to describe it. Thus a music critic's first obligation is to music itself. People who stay

in the profession any length of time come to consider themselves members of the musical profession, whether or not they compose music or perform it in public. They tend to act rather as if they were responsible members of the musical profession who are verbalizing about music, explaining it, as well as they can in words. Any reviewer who approaches his function otherwise is really a lowbrow, because interpreting the artist to the public may just possibly serve some purpose for both the artist and the public, but interpreting the public to the artist cannot possibly be of any use to either.

The critic's second obligation is to his readers. He must write well in order to make himself clear. In this he fulfils an obligation to the art, which is to write about art as if writing about serious art, which itself is a serious art. Whoever does not pay art the compliment of applying standards to his own art insults the reader and makes a fool of himself.

The critic owes the artist nothing further. That is to say, he owes him whatever understanding he is capable of, and respect for workmanship. He owes the same, plus some good workmanship on his part, to the reader; and he owes to his employer the assumption of the onus of public controversy, in case he gets into one, because that will enable his employer to keep out of court; and that, I think, is absolutely all that he owes his employer, because he is employed to state what *he* thinks about it, and not what the employer thinks about it. And he owes to everybody the very simple duty of telling the truth as he believes the truth to be. He does not have to be right. Nobody has to be right. He merely has to know what he has to talk about, and talk honestly.

Eric Newton (*art critic and former art editor of the LONDON SUNDAY TIMES and the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN*):

I would much rather say what I think an art critic is, than what his responsibility is. I would like to define his qualifications. First of all, he reacts—rightly or wrongly, stupidly or violently—to a specific work of art with sufficient violence to make him want to be articulate in some way or another over it. Secondly, he ought to have sufficient experience, not only of that work of art, but of works of art in general, to be able to correlate and refer one reaction to another, so that he can explain himself more or less intelligently and on a more or less broad basis. Thirdly, I think he ought to be sufficiently interested in the use of the prose of the language he happens to speak, to want to use it in order to communicate his reactions.

This brings us up to the question of responsibilities. With whom is the critic to communicate? Here I cannot agree sufficiently with Mr. Thomson in saying, "not the artist."

One of my colleagues once said, "We are critics. We are the only people I know who are paid to learn." Every time we look at a work of art we are learning something, and some idiot of an editor pays us to say what we have learned.

Learning is the exact opposite of teaching. If I tell an artist that he ought to put more green in his picture, or that his composition is too this or too that, it is rather like saying to one of your friends, "You would be much better if your eyes were blue or your nose were a half inch longer." All you are saying is, "I would much prefer you to be somebody else." It is no use for the artist to say that I am looking at the wrong picture. The art critic has nothing to do with the artist; but he does have a lot to do with the critics.

Naturally, I thoroughly disagree with the statement that, "If an artist cannot make himself clear through his works of art, no amount of criticism is going to make it better for us." I do not agree that art does not need interpretation; it needs interpretation more and more. As the camera supersedes the artist in the telling of anecdotes and stories, so the artist becomes more and more limited to the pure use of visual language. The pure use of visual language (which in its extreme case boils down to abstract art) does need explaining—and by its very nature, it cannot be explained. You cannot translate what must be said visually into English prose. Nevertheless, you try, because although most of us are literate in the use of language, an enormous percentage of the population is visually illiterate.

I regard the critic's responsibility as the sensitization of the public so that it becomes more or less visually literate. Art criticism is of some satisfaction to the artist, because the artist

likes being talked about, and nothing is nicer than that, because it saves him from the awful fate of living in a vacuum. But that is a by-product. The critic's responsibilities are entirely to the public.

James Johnson Sweeney (*Director, THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM*):

For me, the essential role of the critic of painting and sculpture is merely to be an interpreter of the artist to the layman. The layman is simply the observer who has not had as much time or opportunity as the critic to devote to observation of works of art. The duty of the critic is to assess for the layman the artist's success in encompassing the aims he has set himself towards opening up fresh fields of human expression through his chosen medium. It also devolves upon the critic to evaluate in the light of tradition and previous achievement those fresh fields that have been opened up by the work of art and by the artist.

The critic is therefore only an interpreter of art to the layman, never an instructor of the artists nor a dictator to them. The work of art comes first, the work of criticism second. The critic never has any right to reverse that order.

The language in which criticism is embodied is essentially different from that of painting and sculpture. We can only hope to suggest visual experience through words. Criticism therefore is strictly a department of literature. Its success resides in its ability to stimulate enjoyment of a work of art in a completely different medium from that which it employs. It is a sort of poor man's poetry about works in another field. It is often a private poetry, because it has to employ a vocabulary which remains a professional jargon, primarily because of its narrow usage. These poor man's poems about paintings and sculpture again are essentially subjective, whether scrupulously literal or enthusiastically rhapsodic. Both these approaches, however, are justifiable, depending for their justification on the success with which they extend the appreciation or understanding of the works of art under consideration. And because criticism must always itself be subjective and relative, rightness can never be scientifically justified. A critic can never hope to prove himself correct. He can establish his point only by the conviction that he exerts, and he can exert this only through his belief in his own judgment and through his ability, by means of the spoken or written word, to stimulate a kindred appreciation in others.

It may sound paradoxical after this to sum up with the statement that the prime requisite of a critic is humility: but humility before the artist and before the work of art—never before convention, the latest mode or the public.

At its meeting on April 2nd, the Editorial Board of MAGAZINE OF ART unanimously adopted the following resolution:

*Before suspending publication, the Editorial Board wishes to express its appreciation to those who have rendered signal, though anonymous, service to MAGAZINE OF ART. To our press, Publishers Printing Company, and to the maker of our plates, Powers Photo Engraving Company, we are indebted for their essential contributions to the appearance of the magazine and their continuous devotion to high standards of quality. Our publishers consultant, Bert Garms Associates, has shown an unflagging interest and has lent sage advice and practical experience to the solution of innumerable problems. Our mailing house, Globe Mail Agency, Inc., and our retail distributor, Eastern News Company, have cooperated efficiently in bringing the magazine promptly to subscribers and newsstands throughout the country.*

*The Editorial Board desires to record its gratitude to each of these firms for its wholehearted participation in the publication of MAGAZINE OF ART.*

## Contributors

The article by JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, is taken from a lecture given at the Frick Collection last December. It is a condensation of material from the forthcoming book, *Antoni Gaudi, Architect, Builder, Sculptor*, written by Mr. Sweeney in collaboration with José Luis Sert and scheduled for publication by Skira this summer.

GEORGE L. K. MORRIS, painter and sculptor, is vice-president of Artists Equity. He was art editor of *Partisan Review* from 1937 to 1943 and president of American Abstract Artists, 1948-49.

The article by W. G. CONSTABLE, Curator of Paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, was read as a paper at the 17th Congress of the History of Art at Amsterdam last July.

JUSTINE M. CORDWELL's article is the outcome of fourteen months spent in West Africa on a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in 1949-50. She is at present adapting for publication a dissertation on *Aesthetic Aspects of Yoruba and Benin Cultures* and collaborating with her husband and another architect on a book on city planning.

ERNESTO ROGERS of the firm of Belgiojoso, Peressutti and Rogers is professor of architecture at the Polytechnic School in Milan. Formerly editor of *Domus*, he will shortly edit a new architectural magazine, *Casabella*. His article was translated for MAGAZINE OF ART by Margaret Scolari.

MAY, 1953

# 3

## PERSPECTIVES USA

SIDNEY HOOK JACQUES VILLON

W. H. AUDEN CLEVE GRAY

WALLACE STEVENS RICHARD GOLDMAN

ROBERT LOWELL PETER F. DRUCKER

ROBERT PITNEY F. W. DUPEE

HERBERT WEINSTOCK WALDEMAR GURIAN

JACQUES BARZUN FREDRIKA BLAIR

LIONEL TRILLING ERIC BENTLEY

\$1.50 per issue \$5.00 per year

Address subscription orders to Paragon Mailing Service, 347 Adams St., Brooklyn 1, New York. Published by Intercultural Publications Inc.

KURT

R O E S C H

May 5 - May 23

CURT VALENTIN GALLERY  
32 East 57 Street, New York

# gabo

space and kinetic  
constructions

PIERRE MATISSE

to may 16

41 e. 57 st. n. y. c.



## Film Review

*Conspiracy in Kyōto*, produced by the Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University, in collaboration with the Fine Arts Department and the School of Music; script and narration by Theodore Bowie, edited by Harris C. Moore; photographer Dennis Pett. Music by Bernhard Heiden. 16 mm; color; sound; 20 min. Available from the Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.; apply for rates.

This delightful film is based on Japanese narrative scrolls of the late twelfth century, and more specifically on the *Ban Dainagon*. One of the original scrolls of this series of three, painted in 1175, is included as No. 20 in the exhibition of Japanese Painting and Sculpture now touring this country.

The choice of subject was a happy one, for the scrolls lend themselves exceptionally well to film treatment. The artist told his story—a lively drama of political intrigue—through consecutive scenes flowing into one another; thus, we are not disturbed by the lack of a frame as a point of reference to lend scale, as we frequently are in films derived from panels or murals.

There are charming vignettes of courtly interiors and vivid, frequently humorous, scenes of daily life among all classes of society. The eye is enchanted by delicate colors and by draftsmanship that rivals in verve the eleventh-century Winchester manuscripts. This film has an advantage over that study of Western life in the middle ages, *Images médiévales*, in that it utilizes homogeneous material of a more consistently high artistic quality.

Special praise should go to Bernhard Heiden's score, which suggests rather than imitates Oriental music; it is admirably performed by the orchestra of the Indiana University School of Music. The university may well be proud of the collaboration of talents among its departments which conceived this film and carried it through so successfully.

HELEN M. FRANC

## Book Reviews

Pierre Francastel, *Peinture et Société: Naissance et destruction d'un espace plastique*, Lyon, Audin, 1951. 300 pp., incl. 72 illus.

It is said that Sir Herbert Read is fomenting an English edition of this book, and I hope the rumor is well based. Many English-reading students would benefit from the unconventionally wide knowledge, sharp wit and flashes of wisdom that Francastel has poured with engaging enthusiasm into this view of the genesis and disintegration of renaissance space. The book is divided in three: part one describes the *quattrocento* crystallization of the renaissance cosmos in spatial symbols; part two indicates their dissolution after four hundred years, corroded by romanticism and plundered by the impressionists; part three searches for symptoms of the new space, image of a modern cosmos that Francastel fervently believes is now in birth.

Brunelleschi's dome construction is linked to Degas' composition in a convincing explanation of spatial expression in the West. The space concepts of the middle ages are sketched in as a backdrop, while in the foreground are present-day art historians, social researchers and Paris artists, like Gischia, Estève and Pignon. The author is ready with good, brief exhortations on the difference between style and fashion, or the relative importance of individual artist versus art movements in the last fifty years; modern thought is used to explore and clarify the renaissance, as well as vice versa.

Part one is the most perfected and best documented portion of the book. Pol Abraham and Victor Sabouret have shown that a functionalist interpretation of medieval architectural forms is a nineteenth-century dream; Francastel attacks that other nineteenth-century myth, the optical normality of renaissance perspective. Sooner or later we will disentangle from our own view of history the knotted threads left there by that most historically minded of centuries, the nineteenth.

### KINESIS

Presents a film by Fernando Birri  
**SELINUNTE**

**Sperimental Film, Palermo, 1952**

A lyric documentary about the ancient Greek colonial city in Sicily, built with magnificence and pride by daring seafarers 2600 years ago, razed by Hannibal and today inhabited by fishermen. A sensitive and romantic film in the best tradition of the Italian documentary film-makers.

**KINESIS, Inc.**

**566 Commercial St. San Francisco  
54 West 47th St. New York**

**LEWIS KIMBALL**

recent oils  
Apr. 29-May 14

**OILS FROM 1952 CARNEGIE**

May 16-28

22 E. 66th

**MARTHA JACKSON GALLERY**

N.Y.C. 21

**YUNKERS**

**Woodcuts  
MAY**

**GORDIN**

**Sculpture  
JUNE**

**GRACE BORGENTH GALLERY • 61 E. 57, N. Y.**

**MAGAZINE OF ART**

Only then will we be able to recognize the greatness of the nineteenth itself; only then will the "historic revival styles" in the arts be seen as strong, necessary, fecund explorations, without which creative art today could not take form. From that point of view Francastel's essay on renaissance space is important, not alone for our understanding of the great achievement of the *quattrocento* and all that was subsequently based thereon, but equally for our understanding of ourselves and of our immediate past. Meanwhile, nineteenth-century illusions continue to have currency as "truths." More than anything else, it is the so-called "truth" of one-point perspective that lies between the artist and the public today, just as it is the so-called "truth" of functionalism that lies between the designer and the public today (the darkness lies on opposite sides in these two examples, to be sure). Francastel has made the renaissance seem more wonderful than ever by looking at its problems with new and broader references, at once lifting the curtain of nineteenth-century ideas that separated us from it and revealing not only differences in points of view but also similarities of development between the 1400's and now.

Francastel is more adept an historian than a critic; this is unavoidable in one who aspires, as he does, to a syncretic view of culture. To grasp the essential character of a whole epoch seems feasible only if the mass of evidence is sifted through the grids of time or of endless electric brains to which none of us, alas, has access.

However partial, Francastel remains illuminating about impressionism and about later Parisian painters. Discarding the perspective of history (like his beloved artists who discard the perspective of renaissance mathematics), the author has produced lively and provocative visions in the latter sections of this book. I assume that there are excellent grounds for disagreeing with his views of modern art and its scholars—I even believe that he has allowed factual errors to creep into his text. But his sharpest polemic is amusing, and as a rule the historian is in the background, qualifying with due modesty the

critic's enthusiasm. If the same tolerance can be extended to works of interpretation as to works of art today, most students of the modern world will find the last half of *Peinture et Société* vigorously entertaining.

A further point may well be raised, however, especially if Francastel's book is to reach a new, wider audience through translation. How justified is his capital assumption that an expression of "space" is characteristic of human cultures? Renaissance space, well and good, as long as there is room for considerable variation. But can we equate to this other "spaces"—Greek, Roman, Chinese, Negro, Aztec or Aurignacian, let alone modern space, still in the making? If modern culture lies utterly within the development of the West—as Francastel, along with most Europeans, seems to assume—there may be a modern space in the making as characteristic as medieval or renaissance space. But among many things we don't know about ourselves and our times is this one: how Wordly have we become—how far from being merely Western?

Francastel's perception of curved space as trenchantly modern is engaging; one thinks at once of artists whose works he never cites, such as Peter Blume or Frank Lloyd Wright. He himself is historian enough to reproduce a Fouquet miniature as evidence that curved space is no modern invention. But when Klee is said to be too personal to contribute to modern space, one begins to wonder what space, in this sense, is. Francastel the syncretist looks to the natural and social sciences, to mathematics, archeology, paidology, psychiatry, etc. for evidence of man's present or historic attitudes towards the world he lives in. One of modern man's "spaces" lies within—within himself, within matter, but within. Its structure will not fail to reflect on the structure of outer space as he conceives it. If this is true, then even so personal an artist as Klee can tell us much about what modern space could be—if, indeed, it is a space that will eventually summarize our cosmic interpretation.

In *Peinture et Société* each section is followed by its own body of notes, where a rich

## LOAN EXHIBITIONS

to Museums and Universities

ROUAULT  
contemporary ITALIAN prints  
french art exhibition POSTERS  
french COLOR lithographs

now available from  
GEORGE BINET PRINT COLLECTION  
Brimfield, Massachusetts

## WORKS OF ART

EGYPTIAN • GREEK • ROMAN  
ORIENTAL • MEDIAEVAL • RENAISSANCE  
PAINTINGS • DRAWINGS • PRINTS

**JACOB HIRSCH**

ANTIQUITIES AND NUMISMATICS, INC.

30 West 54th Street New York 19

reference to other writings and scholarly duelling are amusingly jumbled. The text and the notes are interlarded with forty-eight plates (seventy-two illustrations), accompanied by separate, lengthy comments for each work of art reproduced. This partitioning of material, evidently a left-over of classroom notes for slide-illustrated lectures, seems more enlivening than disturbing. Three appendices deal with Brunelleschi and theories of perspective. No index, no bibliography.

EDGAR KAUFMANN, JR.  
*Museum of Modern Art*

Walter Friedlaender, *David to Delacroix*, translated by Robert Goldwater. Cambridge, Harvard University, 1952. xii + 136 pp. + 83 plates. \$6.

We finally have a translation of Dr. Friedlaender's delightful study of French painting from David to Delacroix, which originally appeared in 1930 as a student's handbook. It is doubtful whether the specialist in the history of French painting will learn much that he has not already known from this volume, but for the layman there is plenty to digest.

Dr. Friedlaender's thesis is that there was a direct line of descent from David to Delacroix in style, subject matter and feeling, and that Delacroix was, as he says (p. 135) no "revolutionary, no liberator, no propagandist like Victor Hugo." It has been pointed out elsewhere that the so-called Romanticists were never all of a piece on any issue, and consequently it should cause no surprise that Delacroix should have deviated from the historian's norm of what a Romanticist should be. But since such things do cause surprise, it will prove very useful to have so thorough a student of the history of art repeat once more that the names of schools and movements are at best merely cataloguing devices.

Since no review or notice of a book is complete without a word of dispraise, let me say that it seems too bad that most of the plates are of paintings so well known to Americans that a mere mention of the titles of the pictures in question would have sufficed. On the other hand, the less well-known pictures are not reproduced, even when they are discussed at some length. But this is a minor flaw, no doubt, and for the text itself one can have nothing but gratitude.

GEORGE BOAS  
*Johns Hopkins University*

Germain Seligman, *O! Fickle Taste or Objectivity in Art*, preface by Rene Huyghe, New York, Bond Wheelwright, 1952. xviii + 180 pp. + 59 plates. \$5.

This unusually attractive book consists of stimulating essays arranged in a somewhat confusing sequence. In one way or another, all bear on a central question: Why has American taste altered so frequently and so extravagantly during the last fifty years?

In a preliminary section Mr. Seligman considers the change in the type of person who collects, the influence upon collecting of museums, of archeological discoveries and of books. He then takes up the effects of propaganda and the economics of the art market. He concludes that the instability of American taste results from the visual illiteracy of American collectors and their unwillingness first to cultivate and then to trust their own instinctive reactions to works of art.

In another group of essays Mr. Seligman discusses French art during the eighteenth, seventeenth and sixteenth centuries. Its importance has not been sufficiently recognized in the United States, he maintains. Certainly some Americans will find his Francocentric standard of values unsympathetic if not unfamiliar. In his desire to glorify the accomplishments of French artists, he ignores the achievements of the Italians and all but denies the immense contribution they made to French culture. "France has a way of putting her mark indelibly upon her adopted sons," he declares, but he does not so much as hint that Rome may have played a part in the formation of Poussin or of Claude.

The most remarkable studies are those on individual artists. His chapters on Monet, Boudin, Delacroix, Courbet, Redon and Fragonard are masterly. Enthusiasm is combined with most sensitive perceptions; clear thoughts are gracefully expressed. Here is the French critical tradition at its best.

The final section suggests solutions. Politely but definitely Mr. Seligman criticizes French art historians. More vigorously he takes the Americans to task, quoting Francis Taylor's dictum that too often they know everything about a work of art except its essential significance. All that the author says is true and valuable, but perhaps he does not quite reach the heart of the matter. As he points out, the goal of the connoisseur is to respond to the "quality" of works of

**RICHARD  
O'HANLON**  
Sculpture May 5-30  
**WILLARD 23 W. 56**

**ARTHUR SUDLER  
LUCIUS CROWELL**  
**FERARGIL 63 E. 57**

art, immediately and with accurately varying intensity. This the art historian must likewise achieve, but, unlike the connoisseur, he cannot stop there. For him response is not an end; it is only a means towards the understanding of man. All too often the art historian's need to place his esthetic reactions within a broader framework dulls, distorts or dilutes those reactions themselves.

American writing on art is regrettably cut and dried. There is little alternative to learned disquisitions or vulgarized cultural history. Criticism hardly exists. Just to attempt it, as Mr. Seligman has done, is an act of daring. *Oh! Fickle Taste* is not definitive; it does not supply final answers, but it does provoke attention to a great variety of major problems that are generally ignored. These problems, once raised, are considered from a great variety of aspects, but always with sincerity. Daring, provocative and unflinchingly sincere, these qualities produce a book that is both unusual and welcome.

JOHN COOLIDGE  
Fogg Museum of Art

Julie Braun-Vogelstein, *Art the Image of the West*, New York, Pantheon, 1952. xi + 245 pp., 65 illus. \$4.50.

Four persons are named by Dr. Braun-Vogelstein as having had a hand in re-creating her work in the English language. It follows that they must share in the praise or blame attaching to the volume, as must also the editors of Pantheon Books. These last have, as usual, produced a most handsome article, beautifully printed and generously illustrated. It deserves only praise—and the flattery of imitation by other publishers.

One wishes that the text were equally unexceptionable. The theme of the work is simple and good and was worth the attempt to develop it. Art, the author believes, is the sign-manual of the Western peoples. In art we can read their spiritual, and often their natural, history. This generality she purposes to demonstrate by reviewing the great epochs and monuments of art from Greek times to the twentieth century.

A part of her work must obviously consist of translation: the meaning of stone or paint must be translated into words. Plastic style must inspire literary expression. The writer must moreover explain the reason both for the technical devices and for the successive forms and modes that sculpture, architecture and painting have exhibi-

ted ever since the first Doric column and its comitants.

It is in this verbal reincarnation that the book fails. Dr. Braun-Vogelstein obviously knows a great deal and has thought much about Western art and Western history. She frequently makes acceptable her intellectual or emotional responses to particular masterpieces. But as a whole her book is unintelligible. Not only are her paragraphs disjointed, but her sentences need continual amendment or expansion in order to square with fact and logic. This is taxing for the informed reader, and must be impossibly confusing for the layman. From the initial sentence onward one must recast as one goes: "Art is the first evidence, the archidiom, of man's being." This as it stands is absurd: the first evidence of man's being is not art, but man's awareness of himself and his fellows. As to "archidiom," we learn from the next sentence that it means something other than the spoken or written word; so that art with a capital A, in this grand declaration that opens the book, means the plastic arts exclusively. The rest of the paragraph is doubtful as to doctrine, but this opening portion is a fair sample of the unsatisfactory mode of expression that vitiates the entire work.

Turn to historical matters and you find statements such as: "All established values were thrown into question by the papal schism." Imagine: *all*—and no hint of how, why and by whose hand this total ruin came about. The fact is that the papal schism of thirty-five years no more destroyed faith or morals than it destroyed the secular power of the Church.

The author is not to be followed, either, when she discusses music under the general heading of harmonics, and declares that the renaissance discovery of overtones furnished the theory for the future musical system of Europe. It is not physics or "nature" which, by permitting free movement from one scale to another, lies at the basis of modern music; it is artifice, an unnatural form of low cunning known as equal temperament. So, far from abiding by the order of nature, it cheats at every point and tends to deaden, if anything, the perception of what happens when strings or other bodies give off their natural harmonics "out of tune."

Dr. Braun-Vogelstein's views are therefore to be taken at every point with qualifications. Her philosophizing is too often random suggestion unchecked by a sense of alternatives, and her

**agnes sims**

PAINTINGS • SCULPTURE • WALL HANGINGS • DRAWINGS

**catherine viviano** 42 e. 57 st.

**Louise**

SCULPTURE

**BOURGEOIS**  
**PERIDOT**

6 East 12th Street, N. Y. C.



conclusions (at least as stated in English) seem too often like fleeting insights unchecked by a sense of particulars. Her scanty treatment of twentieth-century art can serve as an illustration of her arbitrariness in choosing facts and framing propositions. Her most inclusive statement, though never really proved in these pages, nevertheless remains true and memorable: "A harmony of many forms, not uniformity, was the goal of Western art for thousands of years." But even here note the illicit abstraction "goal of Western art." Was it a goal, or only the happy result of coexisting efforts? Did each artist desire diversity, or would each have sought to impose uniformity if the politics of Europe had enabled him to do so? The questions Dr. Braun-Vogelstein raises by the way are more numerous and searching than the majority of those she professes to answer.

JACQUES BARZUN  
Columbia University

**Vordemberge-Gildewart, *Epoque néerlandaise*, preface by Jean Arp, Amsterdam, Editions Duwaer, 1949. Unpaged; 37 illus., 12 in color.**

Arp's uninhibited preface to this very handsome portfolio of reproductions of Vordemberge's paintings is titled "Pure Islands": "Vordemberge's works purify the earth. They are the antipode of Picasso's pictures. They never say: behold your ugliness and vileness! On the contrary, they are good, they are beautiful, and incomprehensible for the corrupted; they point out, across the ruins of humanity, the natural way towards light."

Vordemberge was born in Germany in 1899, and his style was formed there by the same influences that created the Bauhaus. Since 1938 he has lived in Amsterdam, and he is represented in the *De Stijl* exhibition recently shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. But black and white are not predominant in Vordemberge's paintings, he does not restrict himself to the right angle, and his triangles and bars form a dynamic variety of relationships, fluid and kinetic in contrast to those of the Dutch painters. He almost never immobilizes his lines by allowing them to extend to the boundaries of the canvas-plane, and when he does occasionally do so, it is only on the vertical, which results in a curiously energetic springing effect.

In an introductory essay, Vordemberge points out that since time and interval are essen-

tials of this art, it approaches choreography "within the confines of the plane," and this comparison of these paintings with the dance and its joy in movement in space is particularly apt, and happier than the analogy with music that is so often made for so-called non-objective art. He calls this keen and unpretentious essay "Abstract-Concrete-Absolute," and rejects the two earlier terms to define his work as "absolute color construction."

Keeping within a severe and simple geometry, Vordemberge has achieved a personal and rarely elegant idiom, as refined if not as stringent as that of Mondrian. The marked elegance is owing not only to the order and delicate tensions of his compositions, but to an immaculate perfection of finish which delights the eye. His paintings remind us that for the Greeks, art was *techné*, and they take on a very special value in today's context of an often impatient expressionism.

Beautifully designed by Vordemberge himself, this book becomes a characteristic example of his art. In large format, the plates—twelve of them in color—are superbly reproduced. A bibliography, a short biographical note and lists of exhibitions and collections are included, and the texts of Arp and the artist are given in German and English as well as in French—the English being serviceable, even if not always the king's.

LIBBY TANNENBAUM  
New York City

**Henry H. Saylor, *Dictionary of Architecture*, New York, Wiley, 1952. 190 pp. + 16 plates. \$4.50.**

***Liberal Arts Dictionary in English, French, German, Spanish*, edited by Mario A. Pei and Frank Gaynor, New York, Philosophical Library, 1952. 307 pp. \$6.**

Architectural dictionaries age quickly. As handbooks, they become obsolete within a generation; a few more generations, and they become historical source material. The last American dictionary, that of Russell Sturgis (1901), has long reached the former and now almost the latter status; Mr. Saylor's work, therefore, fills a long-felt need and will be eagerly received. If any one man can produce a dictionary (and there are many who would advocate the merging of different approaches), then Mr. Saylor—architect, architectural writer and in recent years

clip this ad now

**CERAMIC HOBBY SUPPLIES**  
WHOLESALE OR RETAIL  
We ship anywhere. Let us bid on your KILN installation. Send for wholesale price list.

**SAN DIEGO CERAMICS**  
1471 MORENA BLVD., SAN DIEGO, CALIF. W9-1292

GENUINE ANTIQUE  
**AFRICAN SCULPTURES**  
SEGUY GALLERY 709 LEXINGTON AVE. NEW YORK  
CATALOGUE ON REQUEST TEL: EL 5-3859



editor of the *Journal of the Institute of American Architects*—is certainly that man.

The book seems to be intended for the practicing architect rather than for the historian or the dilettante. It is of remarkable range and variety, in spite of its small volume, with over four thousand entries, including building materials, names of woods, city-planning terms, foreign words and even attempts at nutshell definitions of the various historical styles. It is here that Mr. Saylor may run into some disagreement. The collector of unusual words will find a goldmine: a *haha* and a *zwinger* will be adequately defined, a *morastuga* translated and a *mia-mia* explained. The casual user will find most definitions instructive and only a few (e.g., *clerestory*) a trifle awkward.

The only criticism concerns the lack of illustrations interspersed with the text. The need of them, for a visual understanding of architectural terms, is a real one, long ago understood by most dictionary-makers, including Viollet-le-Duc and Sturgis. In this one respect the only other recent architectural dictionary, that of Ware and Beatty (London, 1946), although far inferior in scope and thoroughness, is more commendable. Mr. Saylor has sixteen plates at the end of the book, not all of them perfect.

Unlike Mr. Saylor, whose work carries on a long tradition, Mario Pei, professor of Romance Philology at Columbia University, and Mr. Frank Gaynor, translator and author of two dictionaries, in their *Liberal Arts Dictionary* are venturing into new territory. This is one of the first attempts at a dictionary of modern terminology in four languages (English, French, German and Spanish) in a field as wide and as difficult to define as liberal arts—"artistic, literary, philosophical." "Artistic" includes not only architecture, painting and sculpture, but also esthetics with all its different nuances in the four languages, and the whole field of music as well. Psychology, whether classed as "literary" or as "philosophical," is also to be found here.

The main section consists of definitions and translations into the three other languages; a very useful cross-index refers from the foreign words back to English. The book is easy to use and the definitions are well written and concise.

Unfortunately, the total result is not altogether successful, possibly because the authors have tried to do too much. Subjects are frequently touched upon without being pursued through their various terms. There are several mistrans-

lations. A rather severe definition of Victorian (translation: *Victorien*, *Viktorianisch*, *Victoriano*) is given; none of *romanesque*, although most readers would need help in the confusing similarity between *romain* and *roman*, *römisch* and *romanisch*, *romano* and *románico*. *Abstract* is translated, the trickier word *non-objective* left out. *Violin* is mentioned, but why not the confusing *viola* (*Bratsche* in German, *viole* in French, not to be mixed up with *violon*)? *Mannerism*, in art history, is a stylistic phase, not "the peculiarity, or sum of peculiarities" of an author's or artist's style, and the German translation is therefore not *Manieriertheit*, but *Manierismus*.

It would be ungrateful to overlook the difficulties of the undertaking. The editors are planning future editions, and it is to be hoped that the gaps will be filled and the mistakes eliminated. Here is one suggestion: why not omit words which are practically identical in the four languages and self-evident in meaning, such as *philosopher*, *doctor*, *person*, *religion*, etc., in order to make room for lesser-known terms that need elucidation?

ADOLF K. PLACZEK  
Columbia University

Emerson H. Swift, *Roman Sources of Christian Art*, New York, Columbia University, 1951. xx + 248 pp., 56 figs., 48 plates. \$10.

Dr. Swift has made the central intention of his book clear in its title. He wants to prove that the sources of Early Christian art, Byzantine as well as Western, are overwhelmingly from Rome, not from the East. Since he is primarily an architectural historian, the book deals largely with architectural forms. Painstakingly and studiously he traces from Rome the development of the basilica, the central and the cruciform groundplans of the Christian church; the use of rich polychrome in general and colored marble incrustation and gold mosaic in particular; construction in brick, arches sprung directly on columns, the dossieret, coupled columns, the relieving arch above lintels, lunette windows, the vandyke string course, the apse, the columnar exedra, and the monumental and systematic use of the true arch, vaults—both barrel and groined—and the dome.

The problem of the sources of Christian style is one of the bloodier battlegrounds of scholarly dissension, and Dr. Swift has left unresolved, or even has provoked, many questions

This summer the **KOOTZ GALLERY** will open its own new building at 481 Commercial St., Provincetown, Mass., where it will show its American and French artists from June 15 to September 10.

**A FEW BOOKINGS ARE AVAILABLE**

For selected artists ready for one-man shows in our main gallery for 1953-54. We are also interested in showing museum-sponsored groups. Rental fees benefit the National Serigraph Society.

WRITE DORIS MELTZER, DIRECTOR, SERIGRAPH GALLERIES, 33 WEST 57TH ST., NEW YORK 19

over which skirmishing will no doubt continue. But in general, in his central thesis, he seems to be perfectly right.

In the course of his polemic, he points out how ephemeral are many of the "Oriental" sources referred to by others, how often they depend on a vague feeling about what is Eastern or on monuments that postdate those they are called upon to influence. One wonders how men like Strzygowski could in all conscience have arrived at their conclusions or been so widely and continuously accepted. Perhaps it happened because he and others were carried away by the feverish search for sources *per se* which has prevailed in some circles as a result of the Influence or Ricochet Approach to art history. This was, and is, a peculiar attitude which depopulates the area of art, isolates art objects from contact with human hands and sets them onto a kind of scholarly baize (manufactured from the whole cloth), where they pang fortuitously against one another, the panger being an "influence" and the pangee going off on a "stylistic trend."

Unfortunately Dr. Swift himself does not reject this attitude. He accepts the primacy of the influence and rushes in to do battle only over its source. Of course there are influences, and it is a valid scholarly task to sort them out accurately. But obviously a condition and a state of mind come first, an influence second. Small children by now must know that every civilization or individual is constantly bombarded with an infinite number of potential influences from which it or he selects what is meaningful. As a matter of fact, men have been known to spot a needed influence in the most unlikely places, or even to go looking for it when it did not come to them—Japanese prints, for example, crumpled in an old packing case, or African sculpture in the then very remote cases of an ethnological museum. On the other hand, gothic churches met European eyes for centuries before romanticism invested them with new meanings that made them influential. The central scholarly problem here, surely, is to define the conditions and mentality of Early Christian times and the art style that they formed. If it were made clear how peoples' changing needs and ideas gradually modified the Roman forms with which they lived and eventually crystallized new forms, keeping what was pertinent from their own Roman tradition and absorbing influences as needed, then the battle of the compass points could abate to proper secondary proportions. Dr. Swift suggests that Byzantine art be renamed

"Eastern Roman," after its principal sources—neglecting even the elementary fact that a style does not equal the sum of its influences.

Large portions of Dr. Swift's book deal with esthetic principles. It is in this kind of depopulated art history that esthetic abstractions also can enjoy a wild, untrammelled growth. In this case "illusionism" and "colorism" burgeon in uninterrupted progression, unmindful of the complexities of human life down in the world where Roman people lived, and unmindful of the variety and mutation of human ideas, meanings, uses, moods and intentions that are involved. Dr. Swift is satisfied to let the two words quoted above explain the essence of Roman style for centuries. In arguing that the crux of all Roman art is the illusionistic representation of atmospheric space, he goes so far as to explain the late antique configuration as being "more optical" than the earlier style, "in other words more *distant* . . . assumed as from a *greater height*, so that we have here a clear example of what is called a 'plunging' view, that is, the visual effect experienced when one stands on a considerable elevation and looks down on a crowd below." Thus, he explains that in Constantinian reliefs figures are flat because people in a crowd look flat when seen from a distance in clear and normal daylight, that their stubby proportions, "over-large heads, blurred and flabby features, the emphasis on shoulders, arms and hands at the expense of the lower members, and the heavy flat folds of drapery, set off by grooving; in short, *all* such stylistic peculiarities are due to effects of optical foreshortening occasioned by the plunging viewpoint and assumed distance." But an unprejudiced glance reveals that it is not a perspective space that is represented, and the figures do not in the least give such an atmospheric impression. Here an over-simplified concept has led to distortion. An explanation is needed which takes into account the content and function of the art, the particular historic context and the mentality of the people who made it.

In spite of these areas of disagreement with the author, however, it must be repeated that the book is extremely useful as a factual architectural history, complete with a summary of conflicting opinion. It renders an invaluable service in accomplishing its central purpose, that is, in describing the gradual intrinsic evolution of architectural forms within the Roman Empire from its beginning to the Christian epoch.

BLANCHE R. BROWN  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

#### SPRIT OF YOUTH

SPRIT OF YOUTH says: "There is one power and one alone that is great enough to contain and direct the turbulence of humanity, and that is the power of love in its highest sense, expressed in constructive activity."—The SPRIT OF YOUTH document is an essential part in modern culture. Get full information from Leon Arnold Muller, 3118 N. Cicero Ave., Chicago 41, Ill.

#### "THE NUDE"

The pictorial merits, pro's and con's of the nude figure study. The facts of figure modeling. A useful and interesting study of psychology and technique for artists and models.

Illustrated art paper edition \$1.00

THE B. G. B. W., BOX 849, DUNEDIN, N. Z.

**Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1915*, Cambridge, Harvard University, 1952. 241 pp., illus., + 230 plates. \$18.50.**

Because Rhode Island is the smallest state in the Union, and because to most people it is a place they pass through when journeying from New York to Boston on the New Haven Railroad, the fact has long been obscured that here is an area of great historical significance, which contains priceless remains of our architectural past in a richness probably unequaled in any other state. It was a Rhode Islander, the late Norman Isham, who initiated the systematic study of early American houses at the opening of this century. Providence gradually became known for its Federal mansions, and Henry-Russell Hitchcock and others brought Rhode Island mill buildings and other architecture of the nineteenth century to the attention of the public. But when I first became interested in colonial Newport in 1931, the sole work dealing with Newport structures was Kenneth Clark's little book of photographs in the *White Pine Series*. Now, at last, Newport is coming into its own; we may even hope for a good history of the seaport.

In no other American community does there exist such a chronological spread of architecture. It ranges over three centuries, displaying in real profusion all modes of domestic building and a generous number of civic, business and ecclesiastical edifices. The authors rightly refer to Newport as "a unique town and a kind of microcosm of America."

The contents of this superbly manufactured and edited volume live up to the format. When the Preservation Society of Newport County completed its thorough survey of all buildings of historical and architectural value, it was decided to publish a book based upon this unusually solid foundation of research—a book that would convey to outsiders the precise nature of their great architectural heritage. In Antoinette Downing, author of a standard work on Rhode Island architecture, and Vincent Scully of Yale University, two sound scholars and graceful writers were found.

Their text is divided into four parts, each surveying an important period of Newport building: the seventeenth century; the eighteenth century, made glorious by the work of Richard Munday and the most distinguished of colonial

designers, Peter Harrison; the early republican period; and the summer watering-place era, which produced an extraordinary nineteenth-century resort architecture. Two appendices provide detailed histories and descriptions of the most notable buildings of the colonial period and of the Clarke Street Restoration. In a supplement at the end of the volume is an excellent key map showing the locations of all structures mentioned. But this is only one half of the book.

The other half, and probably the most valuable as well as the most appealing to a large audience, consists of two hundred and thirty well-reproduced plates supplying a visual survey of Newport architecture, from the Henry Bull House of 1639 to Mrs. Robert Davis's "Gooseneck" erected on Ocean Drive in 1917. A wise decision permitted inclusion of photographs of houses long since razed, of floor plans, of "views" made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and of details of interiors and exteriors. As a result one closes this volume feeling that he has had a comprehensive tour of the island city, which, by good fortune, industrialism passed by and left virtually undisturbed for the edification of our times.

To the layman the portions of the text dealing with the years before 1815 will make the greatest appeal, because Mrs. Downing had a wealth of social and economic history on which to draw as she describes the relation of architectural achievements to the life of a period. Commerce and building had reciprocal influences on each other, as for example, in "Peter Harrison's Era" of 1750-76, which reflects in noble public buildings, churches and costly mansions the treasure won by Newport merchant princes in foreign trade. The town's architecture throughout the colonial period is seen to have a definite local flavor, like the blockfront furniture of its cabinet-makers, which differentiates it from that of the other coastal cities.

By way of contrast, Mr. Scully had almost no suitable works to levy upon for his study of the city's life in the nineteenth century, especially for the comings and goings of the natives to parallel the glittering doings of the "Goldbugs" during the summer season. He makes up for this amply, however, with a superb essay on the evolution of the Newport "cottage," so-called, from the "Stick Style" to the "Shingle Style," and on into what in our own day had better remain nameless. In so doing, he reveals an indigenous American trend both in mansion and vernacular building

## **E A R L      S T E N D A H L**

**Ancient American Art   •   Modern French Paintings**

**7055 HILLSIDE AVE.**

**LOS ANGELES 28**

that held forth real promise during what have customarily been called the "Dark Ages of American Architecture." It is exhilarating to be told that the later styles of Hunt and of the firm of McKim, Mead and White, which became relentlessly academic, marked a regrettable decline in the art and bequeathed a legacy of blight to the twentieth century.

Commencing with the Greek Revival—which in Newport came late and in the days of the town's commercial decline, and which therefore never took root as did earlier and later modes—and continuing on into the present age, the architectural styles of the little city tended increasingly to mirror national trends, and the unique flavor of the colonial seaport gradually dissipated. Newport today thus presents to the

architect, the historian and the American public two remarkable architectural spectacles: the largest number of pre-Revolutionary structures in the country, a collection conveniently gathered within a small space and thus facilitating better than anywhere else realization of what a colonial community was really like; and then, out along Bellevue Avenue and Ocean Drive, an unrivaled assembling of monuments to that conspicuous display worshipped so fervently by the rich of the last century, and which can never be duplicated. It is as if an architectural museum had been purposely created at Newport; and as the news gets around, Americans will certainly beat a path to the Island of Rhode Island to view the sights.

CARL BRIDENBAUGH

University of California

## Latest Books Received



Pablo Picasso, *Goat*, 1951, bronze, from A. C. Ritchie, *Sculpture of the Twentieth Century*

- THE ARCHITECTURE OF BALTIMORE: A PICTORIAL HISTORY, text by Richard Hubbard Howland and Eleanor Patterson Spencer. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins (sponsored by The Peale Museum), 1953. xx + 149 pp. incl. 108 plates. \$7.50.
- ART AND HISTORY IN AMERICA, Three Lectures: Henry Steele Commager, Edgar P. Richardson, Lloyd Goodrich, Washington, D. C., Corcoran Gallery, 1952 (*Bulletin* Vol. 4, No. 2; Vol. 4, No. 4; Vol. 5, No. 2). 34 pp., 7 illus.
- Batarbee, Rex, MODERN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL ART, Sydney, London, Angus & Robertson (distributed by Anglobooks), 1952. 55 pp. + plates, 21 in color. \$12.50.
- Baur, John I. II., LOREN MACIVER, I. RICE PEREIRA, New York, MacMillan (for Whitney Museum) 1953. 71 pp., illus. in black and white and color. \$3.
- Berenson, Bernard, THE ITALIAN PAINTERS OF THE RENAISSANCE, New York, Phaidon (distributed by Garden City), 1953. xiii + 204 pp., 400 illus. + 16 color plates. \$7.50.
- Bronstein, Leo, FRAGMENTS OF LIFE, METAPHYSICS AND ART, New York, Bond Wheelwright, 1953. xii + 218 pp. incl. 67 plates. \$6.50.
- BUILT IN USA: POST-WAR ARCHITECTURE, edited by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Arthur Drexler, New York, Museum of Modern Art (distributed by Simon & Schuster), 1953. 128 pp., incl. 190 plates. \$4.50.
- Christensen, Erwin O., EARLY AMERICAN WOOD CARVING, Cleveland, World, 1952. 149 pp. incl. 52 figs. \$4.
- Christensen, Erwin O., EARLY AMERICAN DESIGNS: TOLEWARE, New York and London, Pitman, 1952. Unpaged, illus. \$1.75.
- Davies, J. G., THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE, New York, Philosophical Library, 1953. \$4.75.
- Focillon, Henri, L'AN MIL, Paris, Colin, 1952. 155 pp. incl. 20 plates.
- Gaunt, William, VICTORIAN OLYMPUS, New York, Oxford, 1952. 199 pp. + 1 plate. \$3.50.
- Hudnut, Joseph, THE THREE LAMPS OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1952. 57 pp.
- Huizinga, J., ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM, New York, Phaidon (distributed by Garden City), 1953. x + 256 pp. + 32 plates. \$2.95.
- Klee, Paul, PEDAGOGICAL SKETCHBOOK, New York, Praeger, 1953. 64 pp. incl. 87 figs. \$3.
- Kris, Ernst, PSYCHOANALYTIC EXPLORATIONS IN ART, New York, International Universities, 1952. 358 pp. + 79 figs. \$7.50.
- Larsen, Erik, P. P. RUBENS, Antwerp, De Sikkels, 1952. 257 pp. incl. 165 plates.
- Mundt, Ernest, ART, FORM, AND CIVILIZATION, Berkeley, University of California, 1952. vii + 246 pp., incl. 25 figs. \$3.75.
- Newcomb, Rexford, ARCHITECTURE IN OLD KENTUCKY, Urbana, University of Illinois, 1953. ix + 185 pp. + 70 plates. \$12.50.
- Olney, Clarke, BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON, HISTORICAL PAINTER, Athens, University of Georgia, 1952. xvi + 309 pp. + black-and-white plates. \$5.
- Ozenfant, FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN ART, New York, Dover, 1952. xviii + 348 pp., illus. \$6.
- Read, Herbert, THE PHILOSOPHY OF MODERN ART, New York, Horizon, 1953. 278 pp. \$4.50.
- RENOIR, introduction by William Gaunt, London, Phaidon (distributed by Garden City), 1952. 15 pp. + 104 plates, 17 in color. \$8.50.
- Ritchie, Andrew C., SCULPTURE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1953. 238 pp. incl. 176 plates. \$7.50.
- A SKETCH BOOK BY TOULOUSE-LAUTREC, introduction by Carl O. Schniewind, New York, Curt Valentin, 1952. Unpaged.



## **hans hofmann school of fine art**

summer session personally conducted by mr. hofmann  
provincetown, mass. • june 15-sept. 4  
52 w. 8 str. n.y.c. gr 7-3491

## **SKOWHEGAN SCHOOL OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

*Faculty:* Henry Varnum Poor, Jack Levine, Sidney Simon, Leonard Bocour, Milton Hebard. *Visiting Artists:* Karl Zerbe, Henry Koerner, Kurt Roesch, Reuben Rubin, Wharton Esherick, William Zorach, and others.

Starts July 1st. G.I. Approval. Request Booklet M

**SKOWHEGAN, MAINE**

## **GEORGE BARBER SCHOOL OF PAINTING**

Unusual location—a private island off the Connecticut coast. Small student classes, also some working space available for professional artists. Living accommodations. JULY 6-AUGUST 31

Write to:

Cornelia Cresson Barber, 59 W. 12th St., New York 11 or after July 1 to Stony Creek, Conn.

## **THE INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO ART SUMMER SCHOOL**

Fine Arts, Industrial Art, Advertising Art, Teacher Training, Degrees, Diplomas. Begins June 29, 1953. Accredited. Michigan Ave. at Adams St. Chicago 3, Illinois. Box 126

## **MOORE INSTITUTE OF ART**

School of Design for Women. 108th Year. Internationally known artist-instructors. Diploma and degree courses in Adv. Art, Art Ed., Fashion Design and Illustration, Interior and Textile Design, Painting and Ill. Crafts. Day and Saturday classes. G.I. and State approved. Scholarships. Dormitories, dining room. Physician. Catalog. 1330 North Broad Street Philadelphia 21, Pa.

## **BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE SUMMER INSTITUTE IN ARTS**

**JUNE 22-AUGUST 29**

**PAINTING AND DRAWING  
ESTEBAN VICENTE  
JOSEPH FIORE**

Ceramics: Daniel Rhodes, Warren Mackenzie, Peter Vouklos, Karen Karnes, David Weinrib; Dance: Merce Cunningham; Theatre: Wesley Huss; Music: Stefan Wolpe, David Tudor, Mme. Irma Wolpe, Josef Marx.

**WRITE: REGISTRAR, BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE, BLACK MOUNTAIN, N. C.**

## **CLEVELAND Institute of Art**

**PROFESSIONAL  
TRAINING**

catalogue

11441 JUNIPER RD.  
CLEVELAND 6, OHIO

## **ART STUDENTS LEAGUE OF N.Y.**

announces  
Summer Schools  
in

Woodstock, N. Y., July 6-August 29

and

New York City, June 1-August 28

*Instructors in Woodstock:* Arnold Blanch, Lucile Blanch, Sigmund Menkes, Edward Millman, Frank J. Reilly.

**Special New  
Features in  
Woodstock**

Sat. classes for children and adults,  
Fri. evening sketch class,

*Instructors in New York:* Charles Alston, Will Barnet, Dagmar Freuchen, Robert W. Johnson, Reginald Marsh, Frank J. Reilly, Harry Sternberg.

**drawing/painting/illustration  
fashion illustration/anatomy**

**FULL OR PART TIME REGISTRATION**

Write or phone for free catalogue

**STEWART KLONIS, Director**

215 W. 57th, N. Y. C.—Circle 7-4510

## **BOSTON MUSEUM SCHOOL**

A DEPARTMENT OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Est. 1876. Professional training with diploma course in Drawing, Graphic Arts, Painting, Sculpture, Jewelry, Silversmithing, Commercial Art, Ceramics. Teacher Training Course. 8 Traveling Scholarships available. Unlimited contact with Museum collection through study and lectures. Catalogue on request. **EVENING SCHOOL** diploma course in Graphic Arts, Sculpture, Ceramics, Painting, Interior Design, and special courses in T. V., Plastic and Photographic Design.

**RUSSELL T. SMITH, Head of School**

230 The Fenway

Boston, Mass.

## **The Cummington School of Arts Cummington, Mass.**

**SUMMER WORKSHOPS IN WRITING  
MUSIC - PAINTING**

**JULY 6 - - AUGUST 16**

Writing: Francis Golfing, Harry Duncan

Music: Alan Hovhannes, Carl Mosbacher, Sydney Harth.

Painting: Theodoros Stamos

Address all inquiries to: Francis Golfing  
Bennington College, Bennington, Vt.



*an  
exhibition  
of  
eighty*

## DAUMIER LITHOGRAPHS



*from the collection  
of Hans Rothe  
arranged by  
the Lowe Gallery,  
Coral Gables, Fla.*

CIRCULATED BY  
EXHIBITION DEPARTMENT  
*The American Federation of Arts,*  
1083 FIFTH AVENUE,  
NEW YORK 28, N. Y.